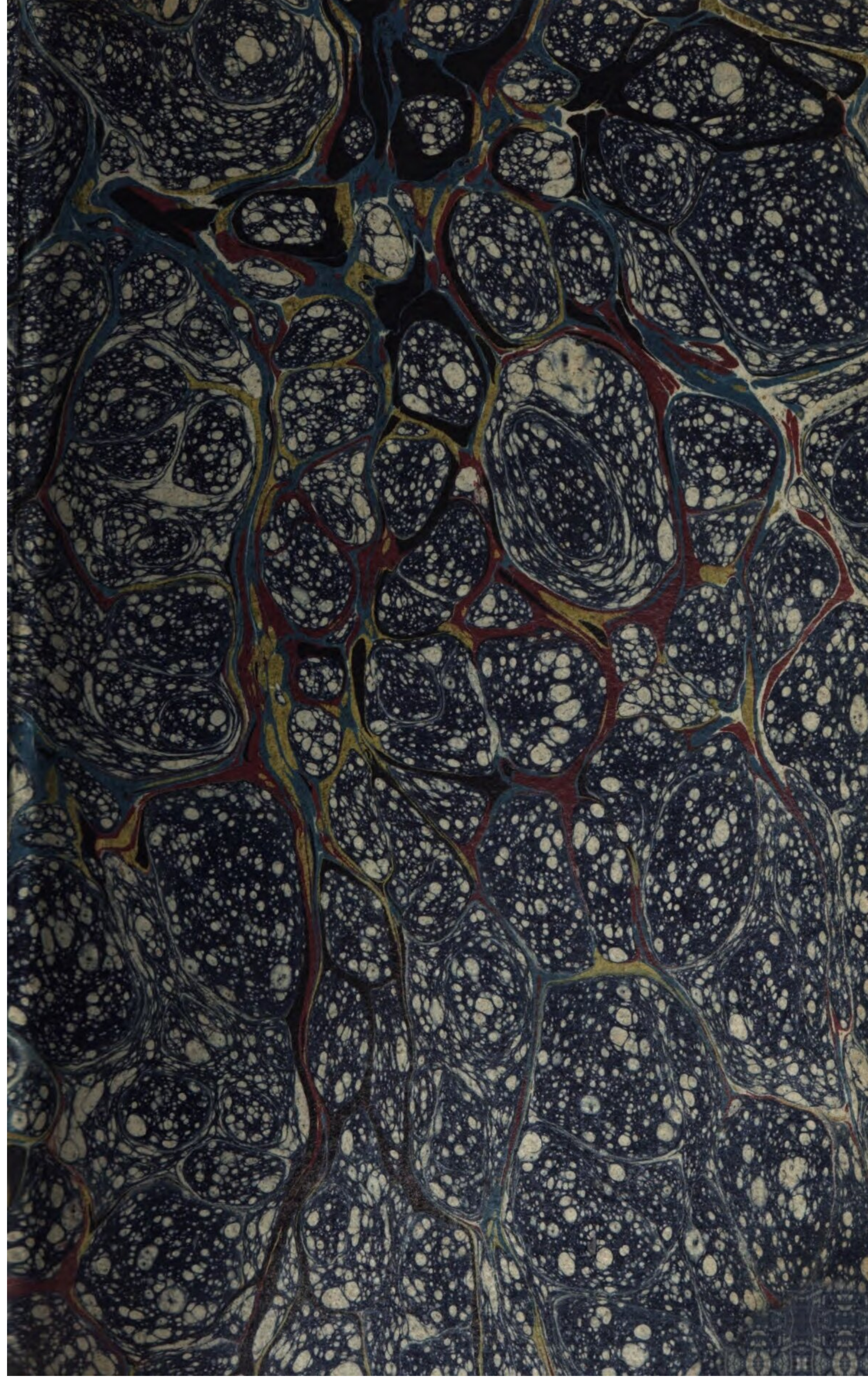








WORKS
OF
THE REV. GEORGE CRABBE.

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THE REV. GEORGE CRABBE.

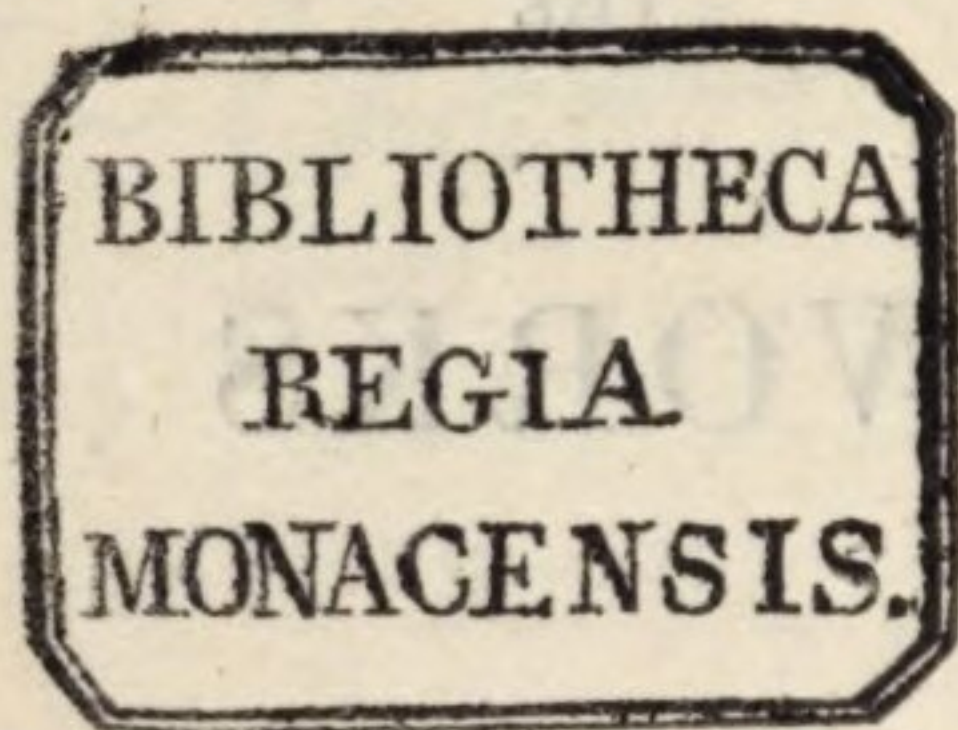
IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

1823.



THE REV. GEORGE CRABBE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

1823.

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THE BOROUGH.

PAULO MAJORA CANAMUS.

Virgil.

THE BOROUGH

PAUL MASON, CLERK

TO
HIS GRACE
THE DUKE OF RUTLAND,
MARQUIS OF GRANBY;

RECORDER OF CAMBRIDGE AND SCARBOROUGH;
LORD-LIEUTENANT AND CUSTOS-ROTULORUM OF THE COUNTY
OF LEICESTER; K.G. AND LL.D.

MY LORD,

THE Poem, for which I have ventured to solicit your Grace's attention, was composed in a situation so near to Belvoir Castle, that the author had all the advantage to be derived from prospects extensive and beautiful, and from works of grandeur and sublimity: and though nothing of the influence arising from such situation should be discernible in these verses, either from want of adequate powers in the writer, or because his

subjects do not assimilate with such views, yet would it be natural for him to indulge a wish, that he might inscribe his labours to the lord of a scene which perpetually excited his admiration, and he would plead the propriety of placing the titles of the House of Rutland at the entrance of a volume written in the Vale of Belvoir.

But, my Lord, a motive much more powerful than a sense of propriety, a grateful remembrance of benefits conferred by the noble family in which you preside, has been the great inducement for me to wish that I might be permitted to inscribe this work to your Grace: the honours of that time were to me unexpected, they were unmerited, and they were transitory: but since I am thus allowed to make public my gratitude, I am in some degree restored to the honour of that period;

I have again the happiness to find myself favoured, and my exertions stimulated, by the condescension of the Duke of Rutland.

It was my fortune, in a poem which yet circulates, to write of the virtues, talents, and heroic death of Lord Robert Manners, and to bear witness to the affection of a brother whose grief was poignant, and to be soothed only by remembrance of his worth whom he so deeply deplored. In a patron thus favourably pre-disposed, my Lord, I might look for much lenity, and could not fear the severity of critical examination: from your Grace, who, happily, have no such impediment to justice, I must not look for the same kind of indulgence. I am assured, by those whose situation gave them opportunity for knowledge, and whose abilities and attention guarded them from error, that I must not expect my failings will

escape detection from want of discernment, neither am I to fear that any merit will be undistinguished through deficiency of taste. It is from this information, my Lord, and a consciousness of much which needs forgiveness, that I entreat your Grace to read my verses, with a wish, I had almost added, with a purpose to be pleased, and to make every possible allowance for subjects not always pleasing, for manners sometimes gross, and for language too frequently incorrect.

With the fullest confidence in your Grace's ability and favour, in the accuracy of your judgment, and the lenity of your decision; with grateful remembrance of benefits received, and due consciousness of the little I could merit; with prayers that your Grace may long enjoy the dignities of the House of Rutland, and continue to dictate improvement for the

surrounding country;—I terminate an address, in which a fear of offending your Grace has made me so cautious in my expressions, that I may justly fear to offend many of my readers, who will think that something more of animation should have been excited by the objects I view, the benevolence I honour, and the gratitude I profess.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Grace's

Most obliged

and obedient humble servant,

GEORGE CRABBE.

PREFACE.

WHETHER, if I had not been encouraged by some proofs of public favour, I should have written the Poem now before the reader, is a question which I cannot positively determine; but I will venture to assert, that I should not, in that case, have committed the work to the press; I should not have allowed my own opinion of it to have led me into further disappointment, against the voice of judges impartial and indifferent, from whose sentence it had been fruitless to appeal: the success of a late publication, therefore, may be fairly assigned as the principal cause for the appearance of this.

When the ensuing Letters were so far written, that I could form an opinion of them, and when I began to conceive that they might not be unacceptable to the public, I felt myself prompted by duty, as well as interest, to put them to the press;

I considered myself bound by gratitude for the favourable treatment I had already received, to show that I was not unmindful of it ; and, however this might be mixed with other motives, it operated with considerable force upon my mind, acting as a stimulus to exertions naturally tardy, and to expectations easily checked.

It must nevertheless be acknowledged, that although such favourable opinion had been formed, I was not able, with the requisite impartiality, to determine the comparative value of an unpublished manuscript, and a work sent into the world. Books, like children, when established, have doubtless our parental affection and good wishes ; we rejoice to hear that they are doing well, and are received and respected in good company : but it is to manuscripts in the study, as to children in the nursery, that our care, our anxiety, and our tenderness are principally directed : they are fondled as our endearing companions ; their faults are corrected with the lenity of partial love, and their good parts are exaggerated by the strength of parental imagination ; nor is it easy even for the more cool and reasonable among parents, thus circumstanced, to decide upon the

comparative merits of their offspring, whether they be children of the bed or issue of the brain.

But, however favourable my own opinion may have been, or may still be, I could not venture to commit so long a Poem to the press without some endeavour to obtain the more valuable opinion of less partial judges: at the same time, I am willing to confess that I have lost some portion of the timidity once so painful, and that I am encouraged to take upon myself the decision of various points, which heretofore I entreated my friends to decide. Those friends were then my council, whose opinion I was implicitly to follow; they are now advisers, whose ideas I am at liberty to reject. This will not, I hope, seem like arrogance: it would be more safe, it would be more pleasant, still to have that reliance on the judgment of others; but it cannot always be obtained; nor are they, however friendly disposed, ever ready to lend a helping hand to him whom they consider as one who ought by this time to have cast away the timidity of inexperience, and to have acquired the courage that would enable him to decide for himself.

When it is confessed that I have less assistance

from my friends, and that the appearance of this work is, in a great measure, occasioned by the success of a former; some readers will, I fear, entertain the opinion that the book before them was written in haste, and published without due examination and revisal: should this opinion be formed, there will doubtless occur many faults which may appear as originating in neglect: Now, readers are, I believe, disposed to treat with more than common severity those writers who have been led into presumption by the approbation bestowed on their diffidence, and into idleness and unconcern, by the praises given to their attention. I am therefore even anxious it should be generally known that sufficient time and application were bestowed upon this work, and by this I mean that no material alteration would be effected by delay: it is true that this confession removes one plea for the errors of the book, want of time; but, in my opinion, there is not much consolation to be drawn by reasonable minds from this resource: if a work fails, it appears to be poor satisfaction when it is observed, that if the author had taken more care, the event had been less disgraceful.

When the reader enters into the Poem, he will find the author retired from view, and an imaginary personage brought forward to describe his Borough for him: to him it seemed convenient to speak in the first person: but the inhabitant of a village, in the centre of the kingdom, could not appear in the character of a residing burgess in a large sea-port; and when, with this point, was considered what relations were to be given, what manners delineated, and what situations described, no method appeared to be so convenient as that of borrowing the assistance of an ideal friend: by this means the reader is in some degree kept from view of any particular place, nor will he perhaps be so likely to determine where those persons reside, and what their connexions, who are so intimately known to this man of straw.

From the title of this Poem, some persons will, I fear, expect a political satire,—an attack upon corrupt principles in a general view, or upon the customs and manners of some particular place; of these they will find nothing satirized, nothing related. It may be that graver readers would have preferred a more historical account of so considerable

a Borough—its charter, privileges, trade, public structures, and subjects of this kind; but I have an apology for the omission of these things, in the difficulty of describing them, and in the utter repugnancy which subsists between the studies and objects of topography and poetry. What I thought I could best describe, that I attempted:—the sea, and the country in the immediate vicinity; the dwellings, and the inhabitants; some incidents and characters, with an exhibition of morals and manners, offensive perhaps to those of extremely delicate feelings, but sometimes, I hope, neither unamiable nor unaffecting: an Election indeed forms a part of one Letter, but the evil there described is one not greatly nor generally deplored, and there are probably many places of this kind where it is not felt.

From the variety of relations, characters, and descriptions which a BOROUGH affords, several were rejected which a reader might reasonably expect to have met with: in this case he is entreated to believe that these, if they occurred to the author, were considered by him as beyond his ability, as subjects which he could not treat in a manner satisfactory to himself. Possibly the admission of

some will be thought to require more apology than the rejection of others: in such variety, it is to be apprehended, that almost every reader will find something not according with his ideas of propriety, or something repulsive to the tone of his feelings; nor could this be avoided but by the sacrifice of every event, opinion, and even expression, which could be thought liable to produce such effect; and this casting away so largely of our cargo, through fears of danger, though it might help us to clear it, would render our vessel of little worth when she came into port. I may likewise entertain a hope, that this very variety, which gives scope to objection and censure, will also afford a better chance for approval and satisfaction.

Of these objectionable parts many must be to me unknown; of others some opinion may be formed, and for their admission some plea may be stated.

In the first Letter is nothing which particularly calls for remark, except possibly the last line—giving a promise to the reader that he should both smile and sigh in the perusal of the following Letters. This may appear vain, and more than an author ought to promise; but let it be considered that the

character assumed is that of a friend, who gives an account of objects, persons, and events to his correspondent, and who was therefore at liberty, without any imputation of this kind, to suppose in what manner he would be affected by such descriptions.

Nothing, I trust, in the second Letter, which relates to the imitation of what are called weather-stains on buildings, will seem to any invidious or offensive. I wished to make a comparison between those minute and curious bodies which cover the surface of some edifices, and those kinds of stain which are formed of boles and ochres, and laid on with a brush. Now, as the work of time cannot be anticipated in such cases, it may be very judicious to have recourse to such expedients as will give to a recent structure the venerable appearance of antiquity; and in this case, though I might still observe the vast difference between the living varieties of nature, and the distant imitation of the artist, yet I would not forbear to make use of his dexterity, because he could not clothe my freestone with *mucor*, *lichen*, and *byssus*.

The wants and mortifications of a poor Clergyman are the subjects of one portion of the third

Letter ; and he being represented as a stranger in the Borough, it may be necessary to make some apology for his appearance in the Poem. Previous to a late meeting of a literary society, whose benevolent purpose is well known to the public, I was induced by a friend to compose a few verses, in which, with the general commendation of the design, should be introduced a hint that the bounty might be farther extended ; these verses a gentleman did me the honour to recite at the meeting, and they were printed as an extract from the Poem, to which in fact they may be called an appendage.

I am now arrived at that part of my work, which I may expect will bring upon me some animadversion. Religion is a subject deeply interesting to the minds of many, and when these minds are weak, they are often led by a warmth of feeling into the violence of causeless resentment : I am therefore anxious that my purpose should be understood ; and I wish to point out what things they are which an author may hold up to ridicule and be blameless. In referring to the two principal divisions of enthusiastical teachers, I have denominated them, as I conceive they are generally called, *Calvinistic* and

Arminian Methodists. The *Arminians*, though divided and perhaps subdivided, are still, when particular accuracy is not intended, considered as one body, having had, for many years, one head, who is yet held in high respect by the varying members of the present day: but the Calvinistic societies are to be looked upon rather as separate and independent congregations; and it is to one of these (unconnected, as is supposed, with any other) I more particularly allude. But while I am making use of this division, I must entreat that I may not be considered as one who takes upon him to censure the religious opinions of any society or individual: the reader will find that the spirit of the enthusiast, and not his opinions, his manners, and not his creed, have engaged my attention. I have nothing to observe of the Calvinist and Arminian, considered as such; but my remarks are pointed at the enthusiast and the bigot, at their folly and their craft.

To those readers who have seen the journals of the first Methodists, or the extracts quoted from them by their opposers* in the early times of this

* Methodists and Papists compared; Treatise on Grace, by Bishop Warburton, &c.

spiritual influenza, are sufficiently known all their leading notions and peculiarities; so that I have no need to enter into such unpleasant inquiries in this place: I have only to observe that their tenets remain the same, and have still the former effect on the minds of the converted: there is yet that imagined contention with the powers of darkness, that is at once so lamentable and so ludicrous: there is the same offensive familiarity with the Deity, with a full trust and confidence both in the immediate efficacy of their miserably delivered supplications, and in the reality of numberless small miracles wrought at their request and for their convenience: there still exists that delusion, by which some of the most common diseases of the body are regarded as proofs of the malignity of Satan contending for dominion over the soul; and there still remains the same wretched jargon, composed of scriptural language, debased by vulgar expressions, which has a kind of mystic influence on the minds of the ignorant. It will be recollected that it is the abuse of those scriptural terms which I conceive to be improper: they are doubtless most significant and efficacious when used with propriety; but it is painful to the mind

of a soberly devout person, when he hears every rise and fall of the animal spirits, every whim and notion of enthusiastic ignorance, expressed in the venerable language of the Apostles and Evangelists.

The success of these people is great, but not surprising: as the powers they claim are given, and come not of education, many may, and therefore do, fancy they are endowed with them; so that they who do not venture to become preachers, yet exert the minor gifts, and gain reputation for the faculty of prayer, as soon as they can address the Creator in daring flights of unpremeditated absurdity. The less indigent gain the praise of hospitality, and the more harmonious become distinguished in their choirs: curiosity is kept alive by succession of ministers, and self-love is flattered by the consideration that they are the persons at whom the world wonders; add to this, that, in many of them, pride is gratified by their consequence as new members of a sect whom their conversion pleases, and by the liberty, which as seceders they take, of speaking contemptuously of the Church and ministers, whom they have relinquished.

Of those denominated *Calvinistic Methodists*, I

had principally one sect in view, or, to adopt the term of its founder, *a church*. This *church* consists of several congregations in town and country, unknown perhaps in many parts of the kingdom, but, where known, the cause of much curiosity and some amusement. To such of my readers as may judge an enthusiastic teacher and his peculiarities to be unworthy any serious attention, I would observe that there is something unusually daring in the boast of this man, who claims the authority of a messenger sent from God, and declares without hesitation that his call was immediate; that he is assisted by the sensible influence of the Spirit, and that miracles are perpetually wrought in his favour and for his convenience.

As it was and continues to be my desire to give proof that I had advanced nothing respecting this extraordinary person, his operations or assertions, which might not be readily justified by quotations from his own writings, I had collected several of these and disposed them under certain heads; but I found that by this means a very disproportioned share of attention must be given to the subject, and after some consideration, I have determined to re-

linquish the design ; and should any have curiosity to search whether my representation of the temper and disposition, the spirit and manners, the knowledge and capacity, of a very popular teacher be correct, he is referred to about fourscore pamphlets, whose titles will be found on the covers of the late editions of the *Bank of Faith*, itself a wonderful performance, which (according to the turn of mind in the reader) will either highly excite, or totally extinguish, curiosity. In these works will be abundantly seen, abuse and contempt of the Church of England and its ministers ; vengeance and virulent denunciation against all offenders ; scorn for morality and heathen virtue, with that kind of learning which the author possesses, and his peculiar style of composition. A few of the titles placed below will give some information to the reader respecting the merit and design of those performances*.

* *Barbar*, in two parts ; *Bond-Child* ; *Cry of Little Faith* ; *Satan's Lawsuit* ; *Forty Stripes for Satan* ; *Myrrh and Odour of Saints* ; *the Naked Bow of God* ; *Rule and Riddle* ; *Way and Fare for Wayfaring Men* ; *Utility of the Books and Excellency of the Parchments* ; *Correspondence between Noctua, Aurita*, (the words so separated) and *Philomela*, &c.

As many of the preacher's subjects are controverted and nice questions in divinity, he has sometimes allowed himself relaxation from the severity of study, and favoured his admirers with the effects of an humbler kind of inspiration, viz. that of the Muse. It must be confessed that these flights of fancy are very humble, and have nothing of that daring and mysterious nature which the prose of the author leads us to expect. *The Dimensions of eternal Love* is a title of one of his more learned productions, with which might have been expected (as a fit companion), *The Bounds of infinite Grace*; but no such work appears, and possibly the author considered one attempt of this kind was sufficient to prove the extent and direction of his abilities.

Of the whole of this mass of inquiry and decision, of denunciation and instruction (could we suppose it read by intelligent persons), different opinions would probably be formed; the more indignant and severe would condemn the whole as the produce of craft and hypocrisy, while the more lenient would allow that such things might originate in the wandering imagination of a dreaming enthusiast.

None of my readers will, I trust, do me so much

injustice as to suppose I have here any other motive than a vindication of what I have advanced in the verses which describe this kind of character, or that I had there any other purpose than to express (what I conceive to be) justifiable indignation against the assurance, the malignity, and (what is of more importance) the pernicious influence of such sentiments on the minds of the simple and ignorant, who, if they give credit to his relations, must be no more than tools and instruments under the control and management of one *called to be their Apostle*.

Nothing would be more easy for me, as I have observed, than to bring forward quotations such as would justify all I have advanced; but even had I room, I cannot tell whether there be not something degrading in such kind of attack: the reader might smile at those miraculous accounts, but he would consider them and the language of the author as beneath his further attention: I therefore once more refer him to those pamphlets, which will afford matter for pity and for contempt, by which some would be amused and others astonished—not without sorrow, when they reflect that thousands look up to the writer as a man literally inspired, to whose

wants they administer with their substance, and to whose guidance they prostrate their spirit and understanding.

Having been so long detained by this Letter; I must not permit my desire of elucidating what may seem obscure, or of defending what is liable to misconstruction, any further to prevail over a wish for brevity, and the fear of giving an air of importance to subjects which have perhaps little in themselves.

The circumstance recorded in the fifth Letter is a fact ; although it may appear to many almost incredible, that, in this country, and but few years since, a close and successful man should be a stranger to the method of increasing money by the loan of it. The Minister of the place where the honest Fisherman resided has related to me the apprehension and suspicion he witnessed : With trembling hand and dubious look, the careful man received and surveyed the bond given to him ; and, after a sigh or two of lingering mistrust, he placed it in the coffer whence he had just before taken his cash ; for which, and for whose increase, he now indulged a belief, that it was indeed both promise and security.

If the Letter which treats of Inns should be found to contain nothing interesting or uncommon; if it describe things which we behold every day, and some which we do not wish to behold at any time; let it be considered that this Letter is one of the shortest, and that from a Poem whose subject was a Borough, populous and wealthy, these places of public accommodation could not, without some impropriety, be excluded.

I entertain the strongest, because the most reasonable hope, that no liberal practitioner in the Law will be offended by the notice taken of dishonourable and crafty attorneys. The increased difficulty of entering into the profession will in time render it much more free than it now is, from those who disgrace it; at present such persons remain; and it would not be difficult to give instances of neglect, ignorance, cruelty, oppression, and chicanery; nor are they by any means confined to one part of the country: quacks and impostors are indeed in every profession, as well with a licence as without one. The character and actions of *Swallow* might doubtless be contrasted by the delineation of an able and

upright Solicitor ; but this Letter is of sufficient length, and such persons, without question, are already known to my readers.

When I observe, under the article *Physic*, that the young and less experienced physician will write rather with a view of making himself known, than to investigate and publish some useful fact, I would not be thought to extend this remark to all the publications of such men. I could point out a work, containing experiments the most judicious, and conclusions the most interesting, made by a gentleman, then young, which would have given just celebrity to a man after long practice. The observation is nevertheless generally true : many opinions have been adopted and many books written, not that the theory might be well defended, but that a young physician might be better known.

If I have in one Letter praised the good-humour of a man confessedly too inattentive to business, and, in another, if I have written somewhat sarcastically of “ the brick-floored parlour which the butcher lets ;” be credit given to me, that in the one case I had no intention to apologize for idleness, nor any design in the other to treat with contempt

the resources of the poor. The good-humour is considered as the consolation of disappointment, and the room is so mentioned because the lodger is vain. Most of my readers will perceive this; but I shall be sorry if by any I am supposed to make pleas for the vices of men, or treat their wants and infirmities with derision or with disdain.

It is probable, that really polite people, with cultivated minds and harmonious tempers, may judge my description of a Card-club conversation to be highly exaggerated, if not totally fictitious; and I acknowledge that the club must admit a particular kind of members to afford such specimens of acrimony and objurgation: yet that such language is spoken, and such manners exhibited, is most certain, chiefly among those who, being successful in life, without previous education, not very nice in their feelings, or very attentive to improprieties, sit down to game with no other view than that of adding the gain of the evening to the profits of the day; whom therefore disappointment itself makes angry, and, when caused by another, resentful and vindictive.

The Letter on Itinerant Players will to some

appear too harshly written, their profligacy exaggerated, and their distresses magnified; but though the respectability of a part of these people may give us a more favourable view of the whole body; though some actors be sober, and some managers prudent; still there is vice and misery left, more than sufficient to justify my description. But if I could find only one woman who (passing forty years on many stages, and sustaining many principal characters) laments in her unrespected old age, that there was no workhouse to which she could legally sue for admission; if I could produce only one female, seduced upon the boards, and starved in her lodging, compelled by her poverty to sing, and by her sufferings to weep, without any prospect but misery, or any consolation but death; if I could exhibit only one youth who sought refuge from parental authority in the licentious freedom of a wandering company; yet, with three such examples, I should feel myself justified in the account I have given:—but such characters and sufferings are common, and there are few of these societies which could not show members of this description. To some, indeed, the

life has its satisfactions: they never expected to be free from labour, and their present kind they think is light: they have no delicate ideas of shame, and therefore duns and hisses give them no other pain than what arises from the fear of not being trusted, joined with the apprehension that they may have nothing to subsist upon except their credit.

For the Alms-House itself, its Governors and Inhabitants, I have not much to offer, in favour of the subject or of the characters. One of these, *Sir Denys Brand*, may be considered as too highly placed for an author (who seldom ventures above middle-life) to delineate; and indeed I had some idea of reserving him for another occasion, where he might have appeared with those in his own rank; but then it is most uncertain whether he would ever appear, and he has been so many years prepared for the public whenever opportunity might offer, that I have at length given him place, and though with his inferiors, yet as a ruler over them. Of these, one (*Benbow*) may be thought too low and despicable to be admitted here; but he is a Borough-character, and, however disgusting in some respects

a picture may be, it will please some, and be tolerated by many, if it can boast that one merit of being a faithful likeness.

Blaney and *Clelia*, a male and female inhabitant of this mansion, are drawn at some length; and I may be thought to have given them attention which they do not merit. I plead not for the originality, but for the truth of the character; and though it may not be very pleasing, it may be useful to delineate (for certain minds) these mixtures of levity and vice; people who are thus incurably vain and determinately worldly; thus devoted to enjoyment and insensible of shame, and so miserably fond of their pleasures, that they court even the remembrance with eager solicitation, by conjuring up the ghosts of departed indulgences with all the aid that memory can afford them. These characters demand some attention, because they hold out a warning to that numerous class of young people who are too lively to be discreet; to whom the purpose of life is amusement, and who are always in danger of falling into vicious habits, because they have too much activity to be quiet, and too little strength to be steady.

The characters of the Hospital-Directors were written many years since, and, so far as I was capable of judging, are drawn with *fidelity*. I mention this circumstance, that, if any reader should find a difference in the versification or expression, he will be thus enabled to account for it.

The Poor are here almost of necessity introduced, for they must be considered, in every place, as a large and interesting portion of its inhabitants. I am aware of the great difficulty of acquiring just notions on the maintenance and management of this class of our fellow-subjects, and I forbear to express any opinion of the various modes which have been discussed or adopted : of one method only I venture to give my sentiments, that of collecting the poor of a hundred into one building. This admission of a vast number of persons, of all ages and both sexes, of very different inclinations, habits, and capacities, into a society, must, at a first view, I conceive, be looked upon as a cause of both vice and misery ; nor does any thing which I have heard or read invalidate the opinion ; happily, it is not a prevailing one, as these houses are, I believe, still confined to that part of the kingdom where they originated.

To this subject follow several Letters describing the follies and crimes of persons in lower life, with one relation of a happier and more consolatory kind. It has been a subject of greater vexation to me than such trifle ought to be, that I could not, without destroying all appearance of arrangement, separate these melancholy narratives, and place the fallen Clerk in Office at a greater distance from the Clerk of the Parish, especially as they resembled each other in several particulars; both being tempted, seduced, and wretched. Yet are there, I conceive, considerable marks of distinction: their guilt is of different kind; nor would either have committed the offence of the other. The Clerk of the Parish could break the commandment, but he could not have been induced to have disowned an article of that creed for which he had so bravely contended, and on which he fully relied; and the upright mind of the Clerk in Office would have secured him from being guilty of wrong and robbery, though his weak and vacillating intellect could not preserve him from infidelity and profaneness. Their melancholy is nearly alike, but not its consequences. *Jachin* retained his belief, and though he hated life,

he could never be induced to quit it voluntarily ; but *Abel* was driven to terminate his misery in a way which the unfixedness of his religious opinions rather accelerated than retarded. I am therefore not without hope that the more observant of my readers will perceive many marks of discrimination in these characters.

The Life of *Ellen Orford*, though sufficiently burthened with error and misfortune, has in it little besides, which resembles those of the above unhappy men, and is still more unlike that of *Grimes*, in a subsequent Letter. There is in this character cheerfulness and resignation, a more uniform piety, and an immovable trust in the aid of religion : this, with the light texture of the introductory part, will, I hope, take off from that idea of sameness which the repetition of crimes and distresses is likely to create. The character of *Grimes*, his obduracy and apparent want of feeling, his gloomy kind of misanthropy, the progress of his madness, and the horrors of his imagination, I must leave to the judgment and observation of my readers. The mind here exhibited is one untouched by pity, unstung by remorse, and uncorrected by shame :

yet is this hardihood of temper and spirit broken by want, disease, solitude, and disappointment; and he becomes the victim of a distempered and horror-stricken fancy. It is evident, therefore, that no feeble vision, no half-visible ghost, not the momentary glance of an unbodied being, nor the half-audible voice of an invisible one, would be created by the continual workings of distress on a mind so depraved and flinty. The ruffian of Mr. *Scott* * has a mind of this nature: he has no shame or remorse: but the corrosion of hopeless want, the wasting of unabating disease, and the gloom of unvaried solitude, will have their effect on every nature; and the harder that nature is, and the longer time required to work upon it, so much the more strong and indelible is the impression. This is all the reason I am able to give, why a man of feeling so dull should yet become insane, should be of so horrible a nature.

That a Letter on Prisons should follow those narratives is unfortunate, but not to be easily avoided. I confess it is not pleasant to be detained

* Marmion.

so long by subjects so repulsive to the feelings of many, as the sufferings of mankind: but though I assuredly would have altered this arrangement, had I been able to have done it by substituting a better, yet am I not of opinion that my verses, or indeed the verses of any other person, can so represent the evils and distresses of life as to make any material impression on the mind, and much less any of injurious nature. Alas! sufferings real, evident, continually before us, have not effects very serious or lasting, even in the minds of the more reflecting and compassionate; nor indeed does it seem right that the pain caused by sympathy should serve for more than a stimulus to benevolence. If then the strength and solidity of truth placed before our eyes have effect so feeble and transitory, I need not be very apprehensive that my representations of Poor-houses and Prisons, of wants and sufferings, however faithfully taken, will excite any feelings which can be seriously lamented. It has always been held as a salutary exercise of the mind, to contemplate the evils and miseries of our nature: I am not therefore without hope, that even this gloomy subject of Imprisonment, and

more especially the Dream of the condemned Highwayman, will excite in some minds that mingled pity and abhorrence, which, while it is not unpleasant to the feelings, is useful in its operation: it ties and binds us to all mankind by sensations common to us all, and in some degree connects us, without degradation, even to the most miserable and guilty of our fellow-men.

Our concluding subject is Education; and some attempt is made to describe its various seminaries, from that of the Poor Widow, who pronounces the alphabet for infants, to seats whence the light of learning is shed abroad on the world. If, in this Letter, I describe the lives of literary men as embittered by much evil; if they be often disappointed, and sometimes unfitted for the world they improve; let it be considered that they are described as men who possess that great pleasure, the exercise of their own talents, and the delight which flows from their own exertions: they have joy in their pursuits, and glory in their acquirements of knowledge. Their victory over difficulties affords the most rational cause of triumph, and the attain-

ment of new ideas leads to incalculable riches, such as gratify the glorious avarice of aspiring and comprehensive minds. Here then I place the reward of learning.—Our Universities produce men of the first scholastic attainments, who are heirs to large possessions, or descendants from noble families. Now, to those so favoured, talents and acquirements are, unquestionably, means of arriving at the most elevated and important situations; but these must be the lot of a few: in general, the diligence, acuteness, and perseverance of a youth at the University, have no other reward than some College honours and emoluments, which they desire to exchange, many of them for very moderate incomes in the obscurity of some distant village: so that, in stating the reward of an ardent and powerful mind to consist principally (I might have said entirely) in its own views, efforts, and excursions, I place it upon a sure foundation, though not one so elevated as the more ambitious aspire to. It is surely some encouragement to a studious man to reflect, that if he be disappointed, he cannot be without gratification; and that if he gets but a very

humble portion of what the world can give, he has a continual fruition of unwearying enjoyment, of which it has not power to deprive him.

Long as I have detained the reader, I take leave to add a few words on the subject of imitation, or, more plainly speaking, borrowing. In the course of a long Poem, and more especially of two long ones, it is very difficult to avoid a recurrence of the same thoughts, and of similar expressions; and, however careful I have been myself in detecting and removing these kinds of repetitions, my readers, I question not, would, if disposed to seek them, find many remaining. For these I can only plead that common excuse—they are the offences of a bad memory, and not of voluntary inattention; to which I must add the difficulty (I have already mentioned) of avoiding the error: this kind of plagiarism will therefore, I conceive, be treated with lenity: and of the more criminal kind, borrowing from others, I plead, with much confidence, “not guilty.” But while I claim exemption from guilt, I do not affirm that much of sentiment and much of expression may not be detected in the vast col-

lection of English poetry : it is sufficient for an author, that he uses not the words or ideas of another without acknowledgment, and this, and no more than this, I mean, by disclaiming debts of the kind ; yet resemblances are sometimes so very striking, that it requires faith in a reader to admit they were undesigned. A line in the second Letter,

“ And monuments themselves memorials need,”

was written long before the author, in an accidental recourse to Juvenal, read—

“ Quandoquidem data sunt ipsis quoque fata sepulchris.”

Sat. x. l. 146.

and for this I believe the reader will readily give me credit. But there is another apparent imitation in the life of *Blaney* (Letter xiv), a simile of so particular a kind, that its occurrence to two writers at the same time must appear as an extraordinary event ; for this reason I once determined to exclude it from the relation ; but, as it was truly un-borrowed, and suited the place in which it stood, this seemed, on after-consideration, to be an act of

cowardice, and the lines are therefore printed as they were written about two months before the very same thought (prosaically drest) appeared in a periodical work of the last summer. It is highly probable, in these cases, that both may derive the idea from a forgotten but common source; and in this way I must entreat the reader to do me justice, by accounting for other such resemblances, should any be detected.

I know not whether to some readers the placing two or three Latin quotations to a Letter may not appear pedantic and ostentatious, while both they and the English ones may be thought unnecessary. For the necessity I have not much to advance; but if they be allowable (and certainly the best writers have adopted them), then, where two or three different subjects occur, so many of these mottoes seem to be required: nor will a charge of pedantry remain, when it is considered that these things are generally taken from some books familiar to the school-boy, and the selecting them is facilitated by the use of a book of common-place: yet, with this help, the task of motto-hunting has been

so unpleasant to me, that I have in various instances given up the quotation I was in pursuit of, and substituted such English verse or prose as I could find or invent for my purpose.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER I.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

These did the ruler of the deep ordain,
To build proud navies, and to rule the main.

Pope's Homer's Iliad, book vi. line 45.

Such scenes has Deptford, navy-building town,
Woolwich and Wapping, smelling strong of pitch;
Such Lambeth, envy of each band and gown,
And Twickenham such, which fairer scenes enrich.

Pope's Imitation of Spenser.

. Et cum cœlestibus undis
Æquoreæ miscentur aquæ: caret ignibus æther,
Cæcaque nox premitur tenebris hiemisque suisque;
Discutient tamen has, præbentque micantia lumen
Fulmina: fulmineis ardescunt ignibus undæ.

Ovid. Metamorph. lib. xi. ver. 520.

The Difficulty of describing Town Scenery—A Comparison with certain Views in the Country—The River and Quay—The Shipping and Business—Ship-Building—Sea-Boys and Port-Views—Village and Town Scenery again compared—Walks from Town—Cottage and adjoining Heath, &c.—House of Sunday Entertainment—The Sea: a Summer and Winter View—A Shipwreck at Night, and its Effects on Shore—Evening Amusements in the Borough—An Apology for the imperfect View which can be given of these Subjects.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER I.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

“DESCRIBE the Borough”—though our idle tribe
May love description, can we so describe,
That you shall fairly streets and buildings trace,
And all that gives distinction to a place?
This cannot be; yet, moved by your request,
A part I paint—let fancy form the rest.

Cities and towns, the various haunts of men,
Require the pencil; they defy the pen:
Could he, who sang so well the Grecian fleet,
So well have sung of alley, lane, or street?
Can measured lines these various buildings show,
The Town-Hall Turning, or the Prospect Row?
Can I the seats of wealth and want explore,
And lengthen out my lays from door to door?

Then let thy fancy aid me—I repair
From this tall mansion of our last-year's mayor,
Till we the outskirts of the Borough reach,
And these half-buried buildings next the beach;
Where hang at open doors the net and cork,
While squalid sea-dames mend the meshy work;
Till comes the hour, when fishing through the tide,
The weary husband throws his freight aside;
A living mass, which now demands the wife,
Th' alternate labours of their humble life.

Can scenes like these withdraw thee from thy wood,
Thy upland forest or thy valley's flood?
Seek then thy garden's shrubby bound, and look,
As it steals by, upon the bordering brook;
That winding streamlet, limpid, lingering, slow,
Where the reeds whisper when the zephyrs blow;
Where in the midst, upon her throne of green,
Sits the large lily⁽¹⁾ as the water's queen;
And makes the current, forced awhile to stay,
Murmur and bubble as it shoots away;
Draw then the strongest contrast to that stream,
And our broad river will before thee seem.

With ceaseless motion comes and goes the tide,
Flowing, it fills the channel vast and wide;
Then back to sea, with strong majestic sweep
It rolls, in ebb yet terrible and deep;

Here sampire-banks ⁽²⁾ and salt-wort ⁽³⁾ bound the flood,
There stakes and sea-weeds withering on the mud;
And higher up, a ridge of all things base,
Which some strong tide has roll'd upon the place.

Thy gentle river boasts its pigmy boat,
Urged on by pains, half grounded, half afloat;
While at her stern an angler takes his stand,
And marks the fish he purposes to land;
From that clear space, where, in the cheerful ray
Of the warm sun, the scaly people play.

Far other craft our prouder river shows,
Hoys, pinks and sloops; brigs, brigantines and snows:
Nor angler we on our wide stream descry,
But one poor dredger where his oysters lie:
He, cold and wet, and driving with the tide,
Beats his weak arms against his tarry side,
Then drains the remnant of diluted gin,
To aid the warmth that languishes within;
Renewing oft his poor attempts to beat
His tingling fingers into gathering heat.

He shall again be seen when evening comes,
And social parties crowd their favourite rooms:
Where on the table pipes and papers lie,
The steaming bowl or foaming tankard by;
'Tis then, with all these comforts spread around,
They hear the painful dredger's welcome sound;

And few themselves the savoury boon deny,
The food that feeds, the living luxury.

Yon is our quay! those smaller hoys from town,
Its various wares, for country-use, bring down;
Those laden waggons, in return, impart
The country-produce to the city mart;
Hark! to the clamour in that miry road,
Bounded and narrow'd by yon vessels' load;
The lumbering wealth she empties round the place,
Package, and parcel, hogshead, chest, and case:
While the loud seaman and the angry hind,
Mingling in business, bellow to the wind.

Near these a crew amphibious, in the docks,
Rear, for the sea, those castles on the stocks:
See! the long keel, which soon the waves must hide;
See! the strong ribs which form the roomy side;
Bolts yielding slowly to the sturdiest stroke,
And planks ⁽⁴⁾ which curve and crackle in the smoke.
Around the whole rise cloudy wreaths, and far
Bear the warm pungence of o'er-boiling tar.

Dabbling on shore half-naked sea-boys crowd,
Swim round a ship, or swing upon the shroud;
Or in a boat purloin'd, with paddles play,
And grow familiar with the watery way:
Young though they be, they feel whose sons they are,
They know what British seamen do and dare;

Proud of that fame, they raise and they enjoy
The rustic wonder of the village-boy.

Before you bid these busy scenes adieu,
Behold the wealth that lies in public view,
Those far-extended heaps of coal and coke,
Where fresh-fill'd lime-kilns breathe their stifling
 smoke.

This shall pass off, and you behold, instead,
The night-fire gleaming on its chalky bed;
When from the light-house brighter beams will rise,
To show the shipman where the shallow lies.

Thy walks are ever pleasant; every scene
Is rich in beauty, lively, or serene —
Rich—is that varied view with woods around,
Seen from the seat, within the shrubb'ry bound;
Where shines the distant lake, and where appear
From ruins bolting, unmolested deer;
Lively—the village-green, the inn, the place,
Where the good widow schools her infant race.
Shops, whence are heard the hammer and the saw,
And village-pleasures unreprieved by law;
Then how serene! when in your favourite room,
Gales from your jasmines soothe the evening gloom;
When from your upland paddock you look down,
And just perceive the smoke which hides the town;

When weary peasants at the close of day
Walk to their cots, and part upon the way;
When cattle slowly cross the shallow brook,
And shepherds pen their folds, and rest upon their
crook.

We prune our hedges, prime our slender trees,
And nothing looks untutor'd and at ease,
On the wide heath, or in the flow'ry vale,
We scent the vapours of the sea-born gale;
Broad-beaten paths lead on from stile to stile,
And sewers from streets, the road-side banks defile;
Our guarded fields a sense of danger show,
Where garden-crops with corn and clover grow;
Fences are form'd of wreck and placed around,
(With tenters tipp'd) a strong repulsive bound;
Wide and deep ditches by the gardens run,
And there in ambush lie the trap and gun;
Or yon broad board, which guards each tempting prize,
“ Like a tall bully, lifts its head and lies.”

There stands a cottage with an open door,
Its garden undefended blooms before:
Her wheel is still, and overturn'd her stool,
While the lone widow seeks the neighb'ring pool:
This gives us hope, all views of town to shun—
No! here are tokens of the sailor-son;

That old blue jacket, and that shirt of check,
And silken kerchief for the seaman's neck;
Sea-spoils and shells from many a distant shore,
And furry robe from frozen Labrador.

Our busy streets and sylvan-walks between,
Fen, marshes, bog and heath all intervene;
Here pits of crag, with spongy, plashy base,
To some enrich th' uncultivated space:
For there are blossoms rare, and curious rush,
The gale's rich balm, and sun-dew's crimson blush,
Whose velvet leaf with radiant beauty dress'd,
Forms a gay pillow for the plover's breast.

Not distant far, a house commodious made,
(Lonely yet public stands) for Sunday-trade;
Thither, for this day free, gay parties go,
Their tea-house walk, their tippling rendezvous;
There humble couples sit in corner-bowers,
Or gaily ramble for th' allotted hours;
Sailors and lasses from the town attend,
The servant-lover, the apprentice-friend;
With all the idle social tribes who seek,
And find their humble pleasures once a week.

Turn to the watery world!—but who to thee
(A wonder yet unview'd) shall paint—the sea?
Various and vast, sublime in all its forms,
When lull'd by zephyrs, or when roused by storms,

Its colours changing, when from clouds and sun
Shades after shades upon the surface run ;
Embrown'd and horrid now, and now serene,
In limpid blue, and evanescent green ;
And oft the foggy banks on ocean lie,
Lift the fair sail, and cheat th' experienced eye.⁽⁵⁾

Be it the summer-noon : a sandy space
The ebbing tide has left upon its place ;
Then just the hot and stony beach above,
Light twinkling streams in bright confusion move ;
(For heated thus, the warmer air ascends,
And with the cooler in its fall contends)—
Then the broad bosom of the ocean keeps
An equal motion ; swelling as it sleeps,
Then slowly sinking ; curling to the strand,
Faint, lazy waves o'ercreep the ridgy sand,
Or tap the tarry boat with gentle blow,
And back return in silence, smooth and slow.
Ships in the calm seem anchor'd ; for they glide
On the still sea, urged solely by the tide ;
Art thou not present, this calm scene before,
Where all beside is pebbly length of shore,
And far as eye can reach, it can discern no more ?

Yet sometimes comes a ruffling cloud to make
The quiet surface of the ocean shake ;

As an awaken'd giant with a frown
Might show his wrath, and then to sleep sink down.

View now the winter-storm! above, one cloud,
Black and unbroken, all the skies o'ershroud;
Th'unwieldy porpoise through the day before
Had roll'd in view of boding men on shore;
And sometimes hid and sometimes show'd his form,
Dark as the cloud, and furious as the storm.

All where the eye delights, yet dreads to roam,
The breaking billows cast the flying foam
Upon the billows rising—all the deep
Is restless change; the waves so swell'd and steep,
Breaking and sinking, and the sunken swells,
Nor one, one moment, in its station dwells:
But nearer land you may the billows trace,
As if contending in their watery chase;
May watch the mightiest till the shoal they reach,
Then break and hurry to their utmost stretch;
Curl'd as they come, they strike with furious force,
And then re-flowing, take their grating course,
Raking the rounded flints, which ages past
Roll'd by their rage, and shall to ages last.

Far off the petrel in the troubled way
Swims with her brood, or flutters in the spray;
She rises often, often drops again,
And sports at ease on the tempestuous main.

High o'er the restless deep, above the reach
Of gunner's hope, vast flights of wild-ducks stretch;
Far as the eye can glance on either side,
In a broad space and level line they glide;
All in their wedge-like figures from the north,
Day after day, flight after flight, go forth.

In-shore their passage tribes of sea-gulls urge,
And drop for prey within the sweeping surge;
Oft in the rough opposing blast they fly
Far back, then turn, and all their force apply,
While to the storm they give their weak complaining
cry;

Or clap the sleek white pinion to the breast,
And in the restless ocean dip for rest.

Darkness begins to reign; the louder wind
Appals the weak and awes the firmer mind;
But frights not him, whom evening and the spray
In part conceal—yon prowler on his way:
Lo! he has something seen; he runs apace,
As if he fear'd companion in the chase;
He sees his prize, and now he turns again,
Slowly and sorrowing—"Was your search in vain?"
Gruffly he answers, "'Tis a sorry sight!
"A seaman's body: there'll be more to-night!"

Hark! to those sounds! they're from distress at sea:
How quick they come! What terrors may there be!

Yes, 'tis a driven vessel: I discern
Lights, signs of terror, gleaming from the stern;
Others behold them too, and from the town
In various parties seamen hurry down;
Their wives pursue, and damsels urged by dread,
Lest men so dear be into danger led;
Their head the gown has hooded, and their call
In this sad night is piercing like the squall;
They feel their kinds of power, and when they meet,
Chide, fondle, weep, dare, threaten, or intreat.

See one poor girl, all terror and alarm,
Has fondly seized upon her lover's arm;
"Thou shalt not venture;" and he answers "No!"
"I will not"—still she cries, "Thou shalt not go."

No need of this; not here the stoutest boat
Can through such breakers, o'er such billows float;
Yet may they view these lights upon the beach,
Which yield them hope, whom help can never reach.

From parted clouds the moon her radiance throws
On the wild waves, and all the danger shows;
But shows them beaming in her shining vest,
Terrific splendour! gloom in glory dress'd!
This for a moment, and then clouds again
Hide every beam, and fear and darkness reign.

But hear we now those sounds? Do lights appear?
I see them not! the storm alone I hear:

And lo ! the sailors homeward take their way ;
Man must endure—let us submit and pray.

Such are our winter-views ; but night comes on—
Now business sleeps, and daily cares are gone ;
Now parties form, and some their friends assist
To waste the idle hours at sober whist ;
The tavern's pleasure or the concert's charm
Unnumber'd moments of their sting disarm ;
Play-bills and open doors a crowd invite,
To pass off one dread portion of the night ;
And show and song and luxury combined,
Lift off from man this burthen of mankind.

Others advent'rous walk abroad and meet
Returning parties pacing through the street ;
When various voices, in the dying day,
Hum in our walks, and greet us in our way ;
When tavern-lights flit on from room to room,
And guide the tippling sailor staggering home :
There as we pass, the jingling bells betray
How business rises with the closing day :
Now walking silent, by the river's side,
The ear perceives the rippling of the tide ;
Or measured cadence of the lads who tow
Some enter'd hoy, to fix her in her row ;
Or hollow sound, which from the parish-bell
To some departed spirit bids farewell !

Thus shall you something of our BOROUGH know,
Far as a verse, with Fancy's aid, can show;
Of sea or river, of a quay or street,
The best description must be incomplete;
But when a happier theme succeeds, and when
Men are our subjects and the deeds of men;
Then may we find the Muse in happier style,
And we may sometimes sigh and sometimes smile.

NOTES TO LETTER I.

Note 1, page 4, line 18.

Sits the large lily as the water's queen.

The white water-lily. *Nymphæa alba*.

Note 2, page 5, line 1.

Sampire-banks.

The jointed glasswort. *Salicornia* is here meant, not the true sampire, the *crithmum maritimum*.

Note 3, page 5, line 1.

Salt-wort.

The salsola of botanists.

Note 4, page 6, line 18.

And planks which curve and crackle in the smoke.

The curvature of planks for the sides of a ship, &c. is, I am informed, now generally made by the power of steam. Fire is nevertheless still used for boats and vessels of the smaller kind.

Note 5, page 10, lines 5 and 6.

And oft the foggy banks on ocean lie,

Lift the fair sail, and cheat th' experienced eye.

Of the effect of these mists, known by the name of fog-banks, wonderful and indeed incredible relations are given; but their property of appearing to elevate ships at sea, and to bring them in view, is, I believe, generally acknowledged.

NOTES TO LETTER I

Note 1, page 4, line 14.

That the large ship is the vessel's partner.

The vessel's partner is the vessel's partner.

Note 2, page 4, line 1.

The vessel's partner is the vessel's partner.

The vessel's partner is the vessel's partner.

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Note 3, page 4, line 1.

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THE BOROUGH.

LETTER II.

THE CHURCH.

. Festinat enim decurrere velox
Flosculus angustæ miseræque brevissima vitæ
Portio ! dum bibimus, dum sertæ, unguenta, puellas
Poscimus, obrepit non intellecta senectus.

Juvenal. Satir. ix. lin. 126.

And when at last thy love shall die,
Wilt thou receive his parting breath ?
Wilt thou repress each struggling sigh,
And cheer with smiles the bed of death ?

Percy.

Several Meanings of the word *Church*—The Building so called, here intended—Its Antiquity and Grandeur—Columns and Ailes—The Tower: the Stains made by Time compared with the mock Antiquity of the Artist—Progress of Vegetation on such Buildings—Bells—Tombs: one in decay—Mural Monuments, and the Nature of their Inscriptions—An Instance in a departed Burgess—Churchyard Graves—Mourners for the Dead—A Story of a betrothed Pair in humble Life, and Effects of Grief in the Survivor.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER II.

THE CHURCH.

“WHAT is a Church?”—Let Truth and Reason speak,
They would reply, “The faithful, pure, and meek;
“From Christian folds, the one selected race,
“Of all professions, and in every place.”

“What is a Church?”—“A flock,” our vicar cries,
“Whom bishops govern and whom priests advise;
“Wherein are various states and due degrees,
“The bench for honour, and the stall for ease;
“That ease be mine, which, after all his cares,
“The pious, peaceful prebendary shares.”

“What is a Church?”—Our honest sexton tells,
“’Tis a tall building, with a tower and bells;
“Where priest and clerk with joint exertion strive
“To keep the ardour of their flock alive;

“ That, by his periods eloquent and grave ;
“ This, by responses, and a well-set stave :
“ These for the living ; but when life be fled,
“ I toll myself the requiem for the dead.”

’Tis to this Church I call thee, and that place
Where slept our fathers when they’d run their race :
We too shall rest, and then our children keep
Their road in life, and then, forgotten, sleep ;
Meanwhile the building slowly falls away,
And, like the builders, will in time decay.

The old foundation—but it is not clear
When it was laid—you care not for the year ;
On this, as parts decay’d by time and storms,
Arose these various disproportion’d forms ;
Yet Gothic, all the learn’d who visit us
(And our small wonders) have decided thus :
“ Yon noble Gothic arch,” “ That Gothic door ;”
So have they said ; of proof you’ll need no more.

Here large plain columns rise in solemn style,
You’d love the gloom they make in either aisle ;
When the sun’s rays, enfeebled as they pass
(And shorn of splendour) through the storied glass,
Faintly display the figures on the floor,
Which pleased distinctly in their place before.

But ere you enter, yon bold tower survey,
Tall and entire, and venerably gray,

For time has soften'd what was harsh when new,
And now the stains are all of sober hue;
The living stains which Nature's hand alone,
Profuse of life, pours forth upon the stone;
For ever growing; where the common eye
Can but the bare and rocky bed descry:
There Science loves to trace her tribes minute,
The juiceless foliage, and the tasteless fruit;
There she perceives them round the surface creep,
And while they meet, their due distinction keep;
Mix'd but not blended; each its name retains,
And these are Nature's ever-during stains.

And wouldst thou, artist! with thy tints and brush,
Form shades like these? Pretender, where thy blush?
In three short hours shall thy presuming hand
Th' effect of three slow centuries command?⁽¹⁾
Thou may'st thy various greens and grays contrive,
They are not lichens, nor like aught alive;—
But yet proceed, and when thy tints are lost,
Fled in the shower, or crumbled by the frost;
When all thy work is done away as clean
As if thou never spread'st thy gray and green;
Then may'st thou see how Nature's work is done,
How slowly true she lays her colours on;
When her least speck upon the hardest flint
Has mark and form and is a living tint;

And so embodied with the rock, that few
Can the small germ upon the substance view.⁽²⁾

Seeds, to our eye invisible, will find
On the rude rock the bed that fits their kind;
There, in the rugged soil, they safely dwell,
Till showers and snows the subtle atoms swell,
And spread th' enduring foliage;—then we trace
The freckled flower upon the flinty base;
These all increase, till in unnoticed years
The stony tower as gray with age appears;
With coats of vegetation, thinly spread,
Coat above coat, the living on the dead:
These then dissolve to dust, and make a way
For bolder foliage, nursed by their decay:
The long-enduring ferns in time will all
Die and depose their dust upon the wall;
Where the wing'd seed may rest, till many a flower
Show Flora's triumph o'er the falling tower.

But ours yet stands, and has its bells renown'd
For size magnificent and solemn sound;
Each has its motto: some contrived to tell,
In monkish rhyme, the uses of a bell;⁽³⁾
Such wond'rous good, as few conceive could spring
From ten loud coppers when their clappers swing.
Enter'd the Church; we to a tomb proceed,
Whose names and titles few attempt to read;

Old English letters, and those half pick'd out,
Leave us, unskilful readers, much in doubt;
Our sons shall see its more degraded state;
The tomb of grandeur hastens to its fate;
That marble arch, our sexton's favourite show,
With all those ruff'd and painted pairs below;
The noble lady and the lord who rest
Supine, as courtly dame and warrior dress'd;
All are departed from their state sublime,
Mangled and wounded in their war with time
Colleagu'd with mischief; here a leg is fled,
And lo! the baron with but half a head;
Midway is cleft the arch; the very base
Is batter'd round and shifted from its place.

Wonder not, mortal, at thy quick decay—
See! men of marble piece-meal melt away;
When whose the image we no longer read,
But monuments themselves memorials need.⁽⁴⁾

With few such stately proofs of grief or pride
By wealth erected, is our Church supplied;
But we have mural tablets, every size,
That wo could wish, or vanity devise.

Death levels man,—the wicked and the just,
The wise, the weak, lie blended in the dust;
And by the honours dealt to every name,
The king of terrors seems to level fame.

—See! here lamented wives, and every wife
The pride and comfort of her husband's life;
Here, to her spouse, with every virtue graced,
His mournful widow has a trophy placed;
And here 'tis doubtful if the duteous son,
Or the good father, be in praise outdone.

This may be nature; when our friends we lose,
Our alter'd feelings alter too our views;
What in their tempers teased us or distress'd,
Is, with our anger and the dead, at rest;
And much we grieve, no longer trial made,
For that impatience which we then display'd;
Now to their love and worth of every kind
A soft compunction turns th' afflicted mind;
Virtues neglected then, adored become,
And graces slighted, blossom on the tomb.

'Tis well; but let not love nor grief believe
That we assent (who neither loved nor grieve)
To all that praise which on the tomb is read,
To all that passion dictates for the dead;
But more indignant, we the tomb deride,
Whose bold inscription flattery sells to pride.

Read of this Burgess—on the stone appear
How worthy he! how virtuous! and how dear!
What wailing was there when his spirit fled,
How mourn'd his lady for her lord when dead,
And tears abundant through the town were shed;

See! he was liberal, kind, religious, wise,
And free from all disgrace and all disguise;
His sterling worth, which words cannot express,
Lives with his friends, their pride and their distress.

All this of Jacob Holmes? for his the name;
He thus kind, liberal, just, religious?—shame!
What is the truth? Old Jacob married thrice;
He dealt in coals, and av'rice was his vice;
He ruled the Borough when his year came on,
And some forget, and some are glad he's gone;
For never yet with shilling could he part,
But when it left his hand, it struck his heart.

Yet, here will love its last attentions pay,
And place memorials on these beds of clay.
Large level stones lie flat upon the grave,
And half a century's sun and tempest brave;
But many an honest tear and heartfelt sigh
Have follow'd those who now unnoticed lie;
Of these what numbers rest on every side!
Without one token left by grief or pride;
Their graves soon levell'd to the earth, and then
Will other hillocks rise o'er other men;
Daily the dead on the decay'd are thrust,
And generations follow, "dust to dust."

Yes! there are real mourners—I have seen
A fair, sad girl, mild, suffering, and serene;

Attention (through the day) her duties claim'd,
And to be useful as resign'd she aim'd:
Neatly she dress'd, nor vainly seem'd t' expect
Pity for grief, or pardon for neglect;
But when her wearied parents sunk to sleep,
She sought her place to meditate and weep:
Then to her mind was all the past display'd,
That faithful memory brings to sorrow's aid:
For then she thought on one regretted youth,
Her tender trust, and his unquestion'd truth;
In ev'ry place she wander'd, where they'd been,
And sadly-sacred held the parting-scene;
Where last for sea he took his leave—that place
With double interest would she nightly trace;
For long the courtship was, and he would say,
Each time he sail'd,—“ This once, and then the day:”
Yet prudence tarried, but when last he went,
He drew from pitying love a full consent.

Happy he sail'd, and great the care she took,
That he should softly sleep, and smartly look;
White was his better linen, and his check
Was made more trim than any on the deck;
And every comfort men at sea can know
Was hers to buy, to make, and to bestow:
For he to Greenland sail'd, and much she told,
How he should guard against the climate's cold;

Yet saw not danger; dangers he'd withstood,
Nor could she trace the fever in his blood:
His messmates smiled at flushings in his cheek,
And he too smiled, but seldom would he speak;
For now he found the danger, felt the pain,
With grievous symptoms he could not explain;
Hope was awaken'd, as for home he sail'd,
But quickly sank, and never more prevail'd.

He call'd his friend, and prefaced with a sigh
A lover's message—"Thomas, I must die:
"Would I could see my Sally, and could rest
"My throbbing temples on her faithful breast,
"And gazing go!—if not, this trifle take,
"And say, till death I wore it for her sake;
"Yes! I must die—blow on, sweet breeze, blow on!
"Give me one look, before my life be gone,
"Oh! give me that, and let me not despair,
"One last fond look—and now repeat the prayer."

He had his wish, had more; I will not paint
The lovers' meeting: she beheld him faint,—
With tender fears, she took a nearer view,
Her terrors doubling as her hopes withdrew;
He tried to smile, and, half succeeding, said,
"Yes! I must die;" and hope for ever fled.

Still long she nursed him: tender thoughts meantime
Were interchanged, and hopes and views sublime.

To her he came to die, and every day
She took some portion of the dread away;
With him she pray'd, to him his Bible read,
Soothed the faint heart, and held the aching head:
She came with smiles the hour of pain to cheer;
Apart she sigh'd; alone, she shed the tear;
Then, as if breaking from a cloud, she gave
Fresh light, and gilt the prospect of the grave.

One day he lighter seem'd, and they forgot
The care, the dread, the anguish of their lot;
They spoke with cheerfulness, and seem'd to think,
Yet said not so—"Perhaps he will not sink:"
A sudden brightness in his look appear'd,
A sudden vigour in his voice was heard;—
She had been reading in the Book of Prayer,
And led him forth, and placed him in his chair;
Lively he seem'd, and spoke of all he knew,
The friendly many, and the favourite few;
Nor one that day did he to mind to recall
But she has treasured, and she loves them all;
When in her way she meets them, they appear
Peculiar people—death has made them dear.
He named his friend, but then his hand she press'd,
And fondly whisper'd, "Thou must go to rest;"
"I go," he said; but as he spoke, she found
His hand more cold, and fluttering was the sound!

Then gazed affrighten'd; but she caught a last,
A dying look of love,—and all was past!

She placed a decent stone his grave above,
Neatly engraved—an offering of her love;
For that she wrought, for that forsook her bed,
Awake alike to duty and the dead;
She would have grieved, had friends presumed to spare
The least assistance—'twas her proper care.

Here will she come, and on the grave will sit,
Folding her arms, in long abstracted fit;
But if observer pass, will take her round,
And careless seem, for she would not be found;
Then go again, and thus her hour employ,
While visions please her, and while woes destroy.

Forbear, sweet maid! nor be by fancy led,
To hold mysterious converse with the dead;
For sure at length thy thoughts, thy spirits pain,
In this sad conflict will disturb thy brain;
All have their tasks and trials; thine are hard,
But short the time, and glorious the reward;
Thy patient spirit to thy duties give,
Regard the dead, but to the living live.⁽⁵⁾

NOTES TO LETTER II.

Note 1, page 23, lines 15 and 16.

*In three short hours shall thy presuming hand
Th' effect of three slow centuries command?*

If it should be objected, that centuries are not slower than hours, because the speed of time must be uniform, I would answer, that I understand so much, and mean that they are slower in no other sense, than because they are not finished so soon.

Note 2, page 24, line 2.

Can the small germ upon the substance view.

This kind of vegetation, as it begins upon siliceous stones, is very thin, and frequently not to be distinguished from the surface of the flint. The byssus jolithus of Linnæus (lepraria jolithus of the present system), an adhesive carmine crust on rocks and old buildings, was, even by scientific persons, taken for the substance on which it spread. A great variety of these minute vegetables are to be found in some parts of the coast, where the beach, formed of stones of various kinds, is undisturbed, and exposed to every change of weather; in this situation, the different species of lichen, in their different stages of growth, have an appearance interesting and agreeable even to those who are ignorant of, and indifferent to the cause.

Note 3, page 24, lines 21 and 22.

*Each has its motto: some contrived to tell,
In monkish rhyme, the uses of a bell.*

The several purposes for which bells are used are expressed in two Latin verses of this kind.

Note 4, page 25, line 18.

But monuments themselves memorials need.

Quandoquidem data sunt ipsis quoque fata sepulchris.

Juvenal. Sat. x. l. 146.

Note 5, page 31, last line.

Regard the dead, but to the living live.

It has been observed to me, that in the first part of the story I have represented this young woman as resigned and attentive to her duties; from which it should appear that the concluding advice is unnecessary; but if the reader will construe the expression “to the living live,” into the sense—live entirely for them, attend to duties only which are real, and not those imposed by the imagination, I shall have no need to alter the line which terminates the story.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER III.

THE VICAR—THE CURATE, &c.

And telling me the sov'reign'st thing on earth
Was parmacity for an inward bruise.

Shakspeare.—Henry IV. Part I. Act 1.

So gentle, yet so brisk, so wond'rous sweet,
So fit to prattle at a lady's feet.

Churchill.

Much are the precious hours of youth mispent
In climbing learning's rugged, steep ascent :
When to the top the bold adventurer's got,
He reigns vain monarch of a barren spot ;
While in the vale of ignorance below,
Folly and vice to rank luxuriance grow ;
Honours and wealth pour in on every side,
And proud preferment rolls her golden tide.

Churchill.

VICAR.

The lately departed Minister of the Borough—His soothing and supplicatory Manners—His cool and timid Affections—No Praise due to such negative Virtue—Address to Characters of this Kind—The Vicar's Employments—His Talents and moderate Ambition—His Dislike of Innovation—His mild but ineffectual Benevolence—A Summary of his Character.

CURATE.

Mode of paying the Borough-Minister—The Curate has no such Resources—His Learning and Poverty—Erroneous Idea of his Parent—His Feelings as a Husband and Father—The dutiful Regard of his numerous Family—His Pleasure as a Writer, how interrupted—No Resource in the Press—Vulgar Insult—His Account of a Literary Society, and a Fund for the Relief of indigent Authors, &c.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER III.

THE VICAR—THE CURATE, &c.

WHERE ends our chancel in a vaulted space,
Sleep the departed vicars of the place;
Of most, all mention, memory, thought are past—
But take a slight memorial of the last.

To what famed college we our Vicar owe,
To what fair county, let historians show:
Few now remember when the mild young man,
Ruddy and fair, his Sunday-task began;
Few live to speak of that soft soothing look
He cast around, as he prepared his book;
It was a kind of supplicating smile,
But nothing hopeless of applause, the while;
And when he finish'd, his corrected pride
Felt the desert, and yet the praise denied.
Thus he his race began, and to the end
His constant care was, no man to offend;

No haughty virtues stirr'd his peaceful mind,
Nor urged the priest to leave the flock behind;
He was his Master's soldier, but not one
To lead an army of his martyrs on:
Fear was his ruling passion; yet was love,
Of timid kind, once known his heart to move;
It led his patient spirit where it paid
Its languid offerings to a listening maid;
She, with her widow'd mother, heard him speak,
And sought awhile to find what he would seek:
Smiling he came, he smiled when he withdrew,
And paid the same attention to the two;
Meeting and parting without joy or pain,
He seem'd to come that he might go again.
The wondering girl, no prude, but something nice,
At length was chill'd by his unmelting ice;
She found her tortoise held such sluggish pace,
That she must turn and meet him in the chase:
This not approving, she withdrew till one
Came who appear'd with livelier hope to run;
Who sought a readier way the heart to move,
Than by faint dalliance of unfixing love.

Accuse me not that I approving paint
Impatient hope or love without restraint;
Or think the passions, a tumultuous throng,
Strong as they are, ungovernably strong:

But is the laurel to the soldier due,
Who cautious comes not into danger's view?
What worth has virtue by desire untried,
When Nature's self enlists on duty's side?

The married dame in vain assail'd the truth
And guarded bosom of the Hebrew-youth;
But with the daughter of the Priest of On
The love was lawful, and the guard was gone;
But Joseph's fame had lessen'd in our view,
Had he, refusing, fled the maiden too.

Yet our good priest to Joseph's praise aspired,
As once rejecting what his heart desired;
"I am escaped," he said, when none pursued;
When none attack'd him, "I am unsubdued;"
"Oh pleasing pangs of love," he sang again,
Cold to the joy, and stranger to the pain.
Ev'n in his age would he address the young,
"I too have felt these fires, and they are strong;"
But from the time he left his favourite maid,
To ancient females his devoirs were paid;
And still they miss him after morning prayer;
Nor yet successor fills the Vicar's chair,
Where kindred spirits in his praise agree,
A happy few, as mild and cool as he;
The easy followers in the female train,
Led without love, and captives without chain.

Ye lilies male! think (as your tea you sip,
While the town small-talk flows from lip to lip;
Intrigues half-gather'd, conversation-scraps,
Kitchen-cabals, and nursery-mishaps,)
If the vast world may not some scene produce,
Some state where your small talents might have use;
Within seraglios you might harmless move,
'Mid ranks of beauty, and in haunts of love;
There from too daring man the treasures guard,
An easy duty, and its own reward;
Nature's soft substitutes, you there might save
From crime the tyrant, and from wrong the slave.

But let applause be dealt in all we may,
Our priest was cheerful, and in season gay;
His frequent visits seldom fail'd to please;
Easy himself, he sought his neighbour's ease:
To a small garden with delight he came,
And gave successive flowers a summer's fame;
These he presented with a grace his own
To his fair friends, and made their beauties known,
Not without moral compliment; how they
“ Like flowers were sweet, and must like flowers
decay.”

Simple he was, and loved the simple truth,
Yet had some useful cunning from his youth;
A cunning never to dishonour lent,
And rather for defence than conquest meant;

'Twas fear of power, with some desire to rise,
But not enough to make him enemies;
He ever aim'd to please; and to offend
Was ever cautious; for he sought a friend;
Yet for the friendship never much would pay,
Content to bow, be silent, and obey,
And by a soothing suff'rance find his way.

Fiddling and fishing were his arts: at times
He alter'd sermons, and he aim'd at rhymes;
And his fair friends, not yet intent on cards,
Oft he amused with riddles and charades.

Mild were his doctrines, and not one discourse
But gain'd in softness what it lost in force:
Kind his opinions; he would not receive
An ill report, nor evil act believe;

“ If true, 'twas wrong; but blemish great or small
“ Have all mankind; yea, sinners are we all.”

If ever fretful thought disturb'd his breast,
If aught of gloom that cheerful mind oppress'd,
It sprang from innovation; it was then
He spake of mischief made by restless men;
Not by new doctrines: never in his life
Would he attend to controversial strife;
For sects he cared not; “ They are not of us,
“ Nor need we, brethren, their concerns discuss;
“ But 'tis the change, the schism at home I feel;
“ Ills few perceive, and none have skill to heal:

“ Not at the altar our young brethren read
“ (Facing their flock) the decalogue and creed;
“ But at their duty, in their desks they stand,
“ With naked surplice, lacking hood and band:
“ Churches are now of holy song bereft,
“ And half our ancient customs changed or left;
“ Few sprigs of ivy are at Christmas seen,
“ Nor crimson berry tips the holly’s green;
“ Mistaken choirs refuse the solemn strain
“ Of ancient Sternhold, which from ours amain
“ Comes flying forth from aile to aile about
“ Sweet links of harmony and long drawn out.”

These were to him essentials; all things new
He deem’d superfluous, useless, or untrue;
To all beside indifferent, easy, cold,
Here the fire kindled, and the wo was told.

Habit with him was all the test of truth,
“ It must be right: I’ve done it from my youth.”
Questions he answer’d in as brief a way,
“ It must be wrong—it was of yesterday.”

Though mild benevolence our priest possess’d,
’Twas but by wishes or by words express’d:
Circles in water, as they wider flow,
The less conspicuous in their progress grow;
And when at last they touch upon the shore,
Distinction ceases, and they’re view’d no more.

His love, like that last circle, all embraced,
But with effect that never could be traced.

Now rests our Vicar. They who knew him best,
Proclaim his life t' have been entirely rest;
Free from all evils which disturb his mind,
Whom studies vex and controversies blind.

The rich approved,—of them in awe he stood;
The poor admired,—they all believed him good;
The old and serious of his habits spoke;
The frank and youthful loved his pleasant joke;
Mothers approved a safe contented guest,
And daughters one who back'd each small request:
In him his flock found nothing to condemn;
Him sectaries liked,—he never troubled them;
No trifles fail'd his yielding mind to please,
'And all his passions sunk in early ease;
Nor one so old has left this world of sin,
More like the being that he enter'd in.

THE CURATE.

Ask you what lands our pastor tithes?—Alas!
But few our acres, and but short our grass:
In some fat pastures of the rich, indeed,
May roll the single cow or favourite steed;

Who, stable-fed, is here for pleasure seen,
His sleek sides bathing in the dewy green :
But these, our hilly heath and common wide
Yield a slight portion for the parish-guide ;
No crops luxuriant in our borders stand,
For here we plough the ocean, not the land ;
Still reason wills that we our pastor pay,
And custom does it on a certain day :
Much is the duty, small the legal due,
And this with grateful minds we keep in view ;
Each makes his off'ring, some by habit led,
Some by the thought, that all men must be fed ;
Duty and love, and piety and pride,
Have each their force, and for the priest provide.'

Not thus our Curate, one whom all believe
Pious and just, and for whose fate they grieve ;
All see him poor, but ev'n the vulgar know
He merits love, and their respect bestow.
A man so learn'd you shall but seldom see,
Nor one so honour'd, so aggrieved as he ;—
Not grieved by years alone ; though his appear
Dark and more dark ; severer on severe :
Not in his need,—and yet we all must grant
How painful 'tis for feeling age to want :
Nor in his body's sufferings ; yet we know
Where time has plough'd, there misery loves to sow ;

But in the wearied mind, that all in vain
Wars with distress, and struggles with its pain.

His father saw his powers—"I'll give," quoth he,
"My first-born learning; 'twill a portion be:"
Unhappy gift! a portion for a son!
But all he had:—he learn'd, and was undone!

Better, apprenticed to an humble trade,
Had he the cassock for the priesthood made,
Or thrown the shuttle, or the saddle shaped,
And all these pangs of feeling souls escaped.

He once had hope—hope ardent, lively, light;
His feelings pleasant, and his prospects bright:
Eager of fame, he read, he thought, he wrote,
Weigh'd the Greek page, and added note on note;
At morn, at evening at his work was he,
And dream'd what his Euripides would be.

Then care began;—he loved, he woo'd, he wed;
Hope cheer'd him still, and Hymen bless'd his bed—
A Curate's bed! then came the woful years;
The husband's terrors, and the father's tears;
A wife grown feeble, mourning, pining, vex'd,
With wants and woes—by daily cares perplex'd;
No more a help, a smiling, soothing aid,
But boding, drooping, sickly, and afraid.

A kind physician, and without a fee,
Gave his opinion—"Send her to the sea."

“ Alas !” the good man answer’d, “ can I send
“ A friendless woman ? Can I find a friend ?
“ No ; I must with her, in her need, repair
“ To that new place ; the poor lie every where ;—
“ Some priest will pay me for my pious pains :”—
He said, he came, and here he yet remains.

Behold his dwelling ; this poor hut he hires,
Where he from view, though not from want, retires ;
Where four fair daughters, and five sorrowing sons,
Partake his sufferings, and dismiss his duns ;
All join their efforts, and in patience learn
To want the comforts they aspire to earn ;
For the sick mother something they’d obtain,
To soothe her grief and mitigate her pain ;
For the sad father something they’d procure,
To ease the burthen they themselves endure.

Virtues like these at once delight and press
On the fond father with a proud distress ;
On all around he looks with care and love,
Grieved to behold, but happy to approve.

Then from his care, his love, his grief he steals,
And by himself an author’s pleasure feels ;
Each line detains him ; he omits not one,
And all the sorrows of his state are gone.—
Alas ! ev’n then, in that delicious hour,
He feels his fortune, and laments its power.

Some tradesman's bill his wandering eyes engage,
Some scrawl for payment thrust 'twixt page and page;
Some bold, loud rapping at his humble door,
Some surly message he has heard before,
Awake, alarm, and tell him he is poor.

An angry dealer, vulgar, rich, and proud,
Thinks of his bill, and passing, raps aloud;
The elder daughter meekly makes him way—
“I want my money, and I cannot stay:
“My mill is stopp'd; what, Miss! I cannot grind;
“Go tell your father he must raise the wind:”
Still trembling, troubled, the dejected maid
Says, “Sir! my father!—” and then stops afraid:
Ev'n his hard heart is soften'd, and he hears
Her voice with pity; he respects her tears;
His stubborn features half admit a smile,
And his tone softens—“Well! I'll wait awhile.”

Pity! a man so good, so mild, so meek,
At such an age, should have his bread to seek;
And all those rude and fierce attacks to dread,
That are more harrowing than the want of bread;
Ah! who shall whisper to that misery peace!
And say that want and insolence shall cease?

“But why not publish?”—those who know too well,
Dealers in Greek, are fearful 'twill not sell;
Then he himself is timid, troubled, slow,
Nor likes his labours nor his griefs to show;

The hope of fame may in his heart have place,
But he has dread and horror of disgrace;
Nor has he that confiding, easy way,
That might his learning and himself display;
But to his work he from the world retreats,
And frets and glories o'er the favourite sheets.

But see! the man himself; and sure I trace
Signs of new joy exulting in that face
O'er care that sleeps—we err, or we discern
Life in thy looks—the reason may we learn?

“ Yes,” he replied, “ I'm happy, I confess,
“ To learn that some are pleased with happiness
“ Which others feel—there are who now combine
“ The worthiest natures in the best design,
“ To aid the letter'd poor, and soothe such ills as mine :
“ We who more keenly feel the world's contempt,
“ And from its miseries are the least exempt ;
“ Now hope shall whisper to the wounded breast,
“ And grief, in soothing expectation, rest.

“ Yes, I am taught that men who think, who feel,
“ Unite the pains of thoughtful men to heal ;
“ Not with disdainful pride, whose bounties make
“ The needy curse the benefits they take ;
“ Not with the idle vanity that knows
“ Only a selfish joy when it bestows ;
“ Not with o'erbearing wealth, that, in disdain,
“ Hurls the superfluous bliss at groaning pain ;

“ But these are men who yield such blest relief,
“ That with the grievance they destroy the grief;
“ Their timely aid the needy sufferers find,
“ Their generous manner soothes the suffering mind;
“ Theirs is a gracious bounty, form'd to raise
“ Him whom it aids; their charity is praise;
“ A common bounty may relieve distress,
“ But whom the vulgar succour, they oppress;
“ This though a favour, is an honour too,
“ Though mercy's duty, yet 'tis merit's due;
“ When our relief from such resources rise,
“ All painful sense of obligation dies;
“ And grateful feelings in the bosom wake,
“ For 'tis their offerings, not their alms, we take.
“ Long may these founts of charity remain,
“ And never shrink, but to be fill'd again;
“ True! to the author they are now confined,
“ To him who gave the treasure of his mind,
“ His time, his health, and thankless found mankind:
“ But there is hope that from these founts may flow
“ A sideways stream, and equal good bestow;
“ Good that may reach us, whom the day's distress
“ Keeps from the fame and perils of the press;
“ Whom study beckons from the ills of life,
“ And they from study; melancholy strife!

“ Who then can say, but bounty now so free,
“ And so diffused, may find its way to me?
“ Yes! I may see my decent table yet
“ Cheer’d with the meal that adds not to my debt;
“ May talk of those to whom so much we owe,
“ And guess their names whom yet we may not know;
“ Blest we shall say are those who thus can give,
“ And next who thus upon the bounty live;
“ Then shall I close with thanks my humble meal,
“ And feel so well—Oh! God! how I shall feel!”

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER IV.

SECTS AND PROFESSIONS IN RELIGION.

. But cast your eyes again,
And view those errors which new sects maintain,
Or which of old disturb'd the Churches' peaceful reign :
And we can point each period of the time
When they began and who begat the crime ;
Can calculate how long th' eclipse endured ;
Who interposed ; what digits were obscured ;
Of all which are already pass'd away,
We knew the rise, the progress, and decay.

Dryden.—Hind and Panther, Part II.

Oh! said the Hind, how many sons have you
Who call you mother, whom you never knew?
But most of them who that relation plead
Are such ungracious youths as wish you dead;
They gape at rich revenues which you hold,
And fain would nibble at your grandame gold.

Hind and Panther.

Sects and Professions in Religion are numerous and successive—
General Effect of false Zeal—Deists—Fanatical Idea of Church
Reformers—The Church of Rome—Baptists—Swedenborgians
—Universalists—Jews.

Methodists of two Kinds ; Calvinistic and Arminian.

The Preaching of a Calvinistic Enthusiast—His Contempt of
Learning—Dislike to sound Morality : why—His Idea of Con-
version—His Success and Pretensions to Humility.

The Arminian Teacher of the older Flock—Their Notions of the
Operations and Power of Satan—Description of his Devices—
Their Opinion of regular Ministers—Comparison of these with
the Preacher himself—A Rebuke to his Hearers ; introduces a
Description of the powerful Effects of the Word in the early and
awakening Days of Methodism.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER IV.

SECTS AND PROFESSIONS IN RELIGION.

“SECTS in Religion?”—Yes, of every race
We nurse some portion in our favour’d place;
Not one warm preacher of one growing sect
Can say our Borough treats him with neglect;
Frequent as fashions, they with us appear,
And you might ask, “how think we for the year?”
They come to us as riders in a trade,
And with much art exhibit and persuade.

Minds are for sects of various kinds decreed,
As diff’rent soils are form’d for diff’rent seed;
Some when converted sigh in sore amaze,
And some are wrapt in joy’s ecstatic blaze;
Others again will change to each extreme,
They know not why—as hurried in a dream;
Unstable they, like water, take all forms,
Are quick and stagnant; have their calms and storms;

High on the hills, they in the sunbeams glow,
Then muddily they move debased and slow;
Or cold and frozen rest, and neither rise nor flow.

Yet none the cool and prudent teacher prize,
On him they dote who wakes their ecstacies;
With passions ready primed such guide they meet,
And warm and kindle with th' imparted heat;
'Tis he who wakes the nameless strong desire,
The melting rapture, and the glowing fire;
'Tis he who pierces deep the tortured breast,
And stirs the terrors, never more to rest.

Opposed to these we have a prouder kind,
Rash without heat, and without raptures blind;
These our *Glad Tidings* unconcern'd peruse,
Search without awe, and without fear refuse;
The truths, the blessings found in Sacred Writ,
Call forth their spleen, and exercise their wit;
Respect from these nor saints nor martyrs gain,
The zeal they scorn, and they deride the pain;
And take their transient, cool, contemptuous view,
Of that which must be tried, and doubtless—*may be true*.

Friends of our faith we have, whom doubts like these,
And keen remarks, and bold objections please;
They grant such doubts have weaker minds oppress'd,
Till sound conviction gave the troubled rest.

“But still,” they cry, “let none their censures spare,
“They but confirm the glorious hopes we share;

“ From doubt, disdain, derision, scorn, and lies,
“ With five-fold triumph sacred truth shall rise.”

Yes! I allow, so truth shall stand at last,
And gain fresh glory by the conflict past:—
As Solway-Moss (a barren mass and cold,
Death to the seed, and poison to the fold,)
The smiling plain and fertile vale o’erlaid,
Choked the green sod, and kill’d the springing blade;
That, changed by culture, may in time be seen,
Enrich’d by golden grain, and pasture green;
And these fair acres rented and enjoy’d,
May those excel by Solway-Moss destroy’d.⁽¹⁾

Still must have mourn’d the tenant of the day,
For hopes destroy’d, and harvests swept away;
To him the gain of future years unknown,
The instant grief and suffering were his own:
So must I grieve for many a wounded heart,
Chill’d by those doubts which bolder minds impart:
Truth in the end shall shine divinely clear,
But sad the darkness till those times appear;
Contests for truth, as wars for freedom, yield
Glory and joy to those who gain the field:
But still the Christian must in pity sigh
For all who suffer, and uncertain die.

Here are, who all the Church maintains approve,
But yet the Church herself they will not love;

In angry speech, they blame the carnal tie,
Which pure Religion lost her spirit by;
What time from prisons, flames, and tortures led,
She slumber'd careless in a royal bed;
To make, they add, the Churches' glory shine,
Should Diocletian reign, not Constantine.

“In pomp,” they cry, “is England's Church array'd,
“Her cool reformers wrought like men afraid,
“We would have pull'd her gorgeous temples down,
“And spurn'd her mitre, and defiled her gown;
“We would have trodden low both bench and stall,
“Nor left a tithe remaining, great or small.”

Let us be serious—Should such trials come,
Are they themselves prepared for martyrdom?
It seems to us that our reformers knew
Th' important work they undertook to do;
An equal priesthood they were loth to try,
Lest zeal and care should with ambition die;
To them it seem'd that, take the tenth away,
Yet priests must eat, and you must feed or pay:
Would they indeed, who hold such pay in scorn,
Put on the muzzle when they tread the corn?
Would they all, gratis, watch and tend the fold,
Nor take one fleece to keep them from the cold?

Men are not equal, and 'tis meet and right
That robes and titles our respect excite;

Order requires it; 'tis by vulgar pride
That such regard is censured and denied;
Or by that false enthusiastic zeal,
That thinks the spirit will the priest reveal,
And show to all men, by their powerful speech,
Who are appointed and inspired to teach:
Alas! could we the dangerous rule believe,
Whom for their teacher should the crowd receive?
Since all the varying kinds demand respect,
All press you on to join their chosen sect,
Although but in this single point agreed,
“Desert your churches and adopt our creed.”

We know full well how much our forms offend
The burthen'd papist and the simple friend;
Him, who new robes for every service takes,
And who in drab and beaver sighs and shakes;
He on the priest, whom hood and band adorn,
Looks with the sleepy eye of silent scorn;
But him I would not for my friend and guide,
Who views such things with spleen, or wears with pride.

See next our several sects,—but first behold
The Church of Rome, who here is poor and old:
Use not triumphant rail'ry, or at least,
Let not thy mother be a whore and beast;
Great was her pride indeed in ancient times,
Yet shall we think of nothing but her crimes?

Exalted high above all earthly things,
She placed her foot upon the neck of kings;
But some have deeply since avenged the crown,
And thrown her glory and her honours down;
Nor neck nor ear can she of kings command,
Nor place a foot upon her own fair land.

Among her sons, with us a quiet few,
Obscure themselves, her ancient state review;
And fond and melancholy glances cast
On power insulted, and on triumph pass'd:
They look, they can but look, with many a sigh,
On sacred buildings doom'd in dust to lie;
“On seats,” they tell, “where priests ’mid tapers dim
“Breathed the warm prayer, or tuned the midnight
hymn;

“Where trembling penitents their guilt confess’d,
“Where want had succour, and contrition rest;
“There weary men from trouble found relief,
“There men in sorrow found repose from grief:
“To scenes like these the fainting soul retired;
“Revenge and anger in these cells expired;
“By pity soothed, remorse lost half her fears,
“And soften’d pride dropp’d penitential tears.

“Then convent-walls and nunnery-spires arose,
“In pleasant spots which monk or abbot chose;
“When counts and barons saints devoted fed,
“And making cheap exchange, had pray’r for bread.

“ Now all is lost, the earth where abbeys stood
“ Is layman’s land, the glebe, the stream, the wood;
“ His oxen low where monks retired to eat,
“ His cows repose upon the prior’s seat;
“ And wanton doves within the cloisters bill,
“ Where the chaste votary warr’d with wanton will.”

Such is the change they mourn, but they restrain
The rage of grief, and passively complain.

We’ve Baptists old and new; forbear to ask
What the distinction—I decline the task;
This I perceive, that when a sect grows old,
Converts are few, and the converted cold:
First comes the hot-bed heat, and while it glows
The plants spring up, and each with vigour grows;
Then comes the cooler day, and though awhile
The verdure prospers and the blossoms smile,
Yet poor the fruit, and form’d by long delay,
Nor will the profits for the culture pay;
The skilful gard’ner then no longer stops,
But turns to other beds for bearing crops.

Some Swedenborgians in our streets are found,
Those wandering walkers on enchanted ground;
Who in our world can other worlds survey,
And speak with spirits though confined in clay:
Of Bible-mysteries they the keys possess,
Assured themselves, where wiser men but guess:

'Tis theirs to see around, about, above,—
How spirits mingle thoughts, and angels move;
Those whom our grosser views from us exclude,
To them appear—a heavenly multitude;
While the dark sayings, seal'd to men like us,
Their priests interpret, and their flocks discuss.

But while these gifted men, a favour'd fold,
New powers exhibit and new worlds behold;
Is there not danger lest their minds confound
The pure above them with the gross around?
May not these Phaetons, who thus contrive
'Twixt heaven above and earth beneath to drive,
When from their flaming chariots they descend,
The worlds they visit in their fancies blend?
Alas! too sure on both they bring disgrace,
Their earth is crazy, and their heav'n is base.

We have, it seems, who treat and doubtless well,
Of a chastising, not awarding hell;
Who are assured that an offended God
Will cease to use the thunder and the rod;
A soul on earth, by crime and folly stain'd,
When here corrected has improvement gain'd;
In other state still more improved to grow,
And nobler powers in happier world to know;
New strength to use in each divine employ,
And, more enjoying, looking to more joy.

A pleasing vision ! could we thus be sure
Polluted souls would be at length so pure ;
The view is happy, we may think it just,
It may be true—but who shall add it must ?
To the plain words and sense of sacred writ,
With all my heart I reverently submit ;
But where it leaves me doubtful, I'm afraid
To call conjecture to my reason's aid ;
Thy thoughts, thy ways, great God ! are not as mine,
And to thy mercy I my soul resign.

Jews are with us, but far unlike to those,
Who, led by David, warr'd with Israel's foes ;
Unlike to those whom his imperial son
Taught truths divine—the preacher Solomon :
Nor war nor wisdom yield our Jews delight ;
They will not study, and they dare not fight. ⁽²⁾

These are, with us, a slavish, knavish crew,
Shame and dishonour to the name of Jew ;
The poorest masters of the meanest arts,
With cunning heads, and cold and cautious hearts ;
They grope their dirty way to petty gains,
While poorly paid for their nefarious pains.

Amazing race ! deprived of land and laws,
A general language, and a public cause ;
With a religion none can now obey,
With a reproach that none can take away :

A people still, whose common ties are gone;
Who, mix'd with every race, are lost in none.

What said their prophet?—"Shouldst thou disobey,
"The Lord shall take thee from thy land away;
"Thou shalt a by-word and a proverb be,
"And all shall wonder at thy woes and thee;
"Daughter and son shalt thou, while captive, have,
"And see them made the bond-maid and the slave;
"He, whom thou leav'st, the Lord thy God, shall bring
"War to thy country on an eagle-wing:
"A people strong and dreadful to behold,
"Stern to the young, remorseless to the old;
"Masters whose speech thou canst not understand,
"By cruel signs shall give the harsh command:
"Doubtful of life shalt thou by night, by day,
"For grief, and dread, and trouble pine away;
"Thy evening-wish,—Would God! I saw the sun;
"Thy morning-sigh,—Would God! the day were done.
"Thus shalt thou suffer, and to distant times
"Regret thy misery, and lament thy crimes."⁽³⁾

A part there are, whom doubtless man might trust,
Worthy as wealthy, pure, religious, just;
They who with patience, yet with rapture look
On the strong promise of the sacred book:
As unfulfill'd th' endearing words they view,
And blind to truth, yet own their prophets true;

Well pleased they look for Sion's coming state,
Nor think of Julian's boast and Julian's fate.⁽⁴⁾

More might I add; I might describe the flocks
Made by seceders from the ancient stocks;
Those who will not to any guide submit,
Nor find one creed to their conceptions fit—
Each sect, they judge, in something goes astray,
And every church has lost the certain way;
Then for themselves they carve out creed and laws,
And weigh their atoms, and divide their straws.

A sect remains, which though divided long
In hostile parties, both are fierce and strong,
And into each enlists a warm and zealous throng.
Soon as they rose in fame, the strife arose,
The Calvinistic these, th' Arminian those;
With Wesley some remain'd, the remnant Whitfield
chose.

Now various leaders both the parties take,
And the divided hosts their new divisions make.

See yonder preacher! to his people pass,
Borne up and swell'd by tabernacle-gas;
Much he discourses, and of various points,
All unconnected, void of limbs and joints;
He rails, persuades, explains, and moves the will,
By fierce bold words, and strong mechanic skill.

“That Gospel, Paul with zeal and love maintain'd,
“To others lost, to you is now explain'd;

“ No worldly learning can these points discuss,
“ Books teach them not as they are taught to us ;
“ Illiterate call us ! let their wisest man
“ Draw forth his thousands as your teacher can :
“ They give their moral precepts ; so, they say,
“ Did Epictetus once, and Seneca ;
“ One was a slave, and slaves we all must be,
“ Until the Spirit comes and sets us free.
“ Yet hear you nothing from such man but works ;
“ They make the christian service like the Turks’.
“ Hark to the churchman : day by day he cries,
“ ‘ Children of men, be virtuous and be wise ;
“ ‘ Seek patience, justice, temp’rance, meekness, truth ;
“ ‘ In age be courteous, be sedate in youth.’—
“ So they advise, and when such things be read,
“ How can we wonder that their flocks are dead ?
“ The heathens wrote of virtue, they could dwell
“ On such light points : in them it might be well,
“ They might for virtue strive ; but I maintain,
“ Our strife for virtue would be proud and vain.
“ When Samson carried Gaza’s gates so far,
“ Lack’d he a helping hand to bear the bar ?
“ Thus the most virtuous must in bondage groan :
“ Samson is grace, and carries all alone.⁽⁵⁾
“ Hear you not priests their feeble spirits spend,
“ In bidding sinners turn to God, and mend ;

“ To check their passions and to walk aright,
“ To run the race, and fight the glorious fight?
“ Nay more—to pray, to study, to improve,
“ To grow in goodness, to advance in love?
“ Oh! babes and sucklings, dull of heart and slow,
“ Can grace be gradual? Can conversion grow?
“ The work is done by instantaneous call;
“ Converts at once are made, or not at all;
“ Nothing is left to grow, reform, amend,
“ The first emotion is the movement’s end:
“ If once forgiven, debt can be no more;
“ If once adopted, will the heir be poor?
“ The man who gains the twenty-thousand prize,
“ Does he by little and by little rise?
“ There can no fortune for the soul be made,
“ By peddling cares and savings in her trade.
“ Why are our sins forgiven?—Priests reply,
“—‘ Because by faith on mercy we rely;
“ ‘ Because, believing, we repent and pray.’—
“ Is this their doctrine?—then they go astray:
“ We’re pardon’d neither for belief nor deed,
“ For faith nor practice, principle nor creed;
“ Nor for our sorrow for our former sin,
“ Nor for our fears when better thoughts begin;
“ Nor prayers nor penance in the cause avail,
“ All strong remorse, all soft contrition fail;—

“ It is the *call!* till that proclaims us free,
“ In darkness, doubt, and bondage we must be;
“ Till that *assures* us, we’ve in vain endured,
“ And all is over when we’re once assured.

“ This is conversion:—First there comes a cry
“ Which utters, ‘ Sinner, thou’rt condemn’d to die;’
“ Then the struck soul to every aid repairs,
“ To church and altar, ministers and prayers;
“ In vain she strives,—involved, ingulf’d in sin,
“ She looks for hell, and seems already in:
“ When in this travail, the new birth comes on,
“ And in an instant every pang is gone;
“ The mighty work is done without our pains,—
“ Claim but a part, and not a part remains.

“ All this experience tells the soul, and yet
“ These moral men their pence and farthings set
“ Against the terrors of the countless debt:
“ But such compounders when they come to jail,
“ Will find that virtues never serve as bail.

“ So much to duties: now to learning look,
“ And see their priesthood piling book on book;
“ Yea, books of infidels, we’re told, and plays,
“ Put out by heathens in the wink’d-on days;
“ The very letters are of crooked kind,
“ And show the strange perverseness of their mind.
“ Have I this learning? When the Lord would speak,
“ Think ye he needs the Latin or the Greek?

“ And lo ! with all their learning, when they rise
“ To preach, in view the ready sermon lies ;
“ Some low-prized stuff they purchased at the stalls,
“ And more like Seneca’s than mine or Paul’s :
“ Children of bondage, how should they explain
“ The spirit’s freedom, while they wear a chain ?
“ They study words, for meanings grow perplex’d,
“ And slowly hunt for truth from text to text,
“ Through Greek and Hebrew :—we the meaning seek
“ Of that within, who every tongue can speak :
“ This all can witness ; yet the more I know,
“ The more a meek and humble mind I show.

“ No ; let the pope, the high and mighty priest,
“ Lord to the poor, and servant to the beast ;
“ Let bishops, deans, and prebendaries swell
“ With pride and fatness till their hearts rebel :
“ I’m meek and modest—If I could be proud,
“ This crowded meeting, lo ! th’ amazing crowd !
“ Your mute attention, and your meek respect,
“ My spirit’s fervour, and my words’ effect,
“ Might stir th’ unguarded soul ; and oft to me
“ The tempter speaks, whom I compel to flee ;
“ He goes in fear, for he my force has tried,—
“ Such is my power ! but can you call it pride ?

“ No, fellow-pilgrims ! of the things I’ve shown
“ I might be proud, were they indeed my own !

“ But they are lent ; and well you know the source
“ Of all that’s mine, and must confide of course ;
“ Mine ! no, I err ; ’tis but consign’d to me,
“ And I am nought but steward and trustee.”

FAR other doctrines yon Arminian speaks ;
“ Seek Grace,” he cries, “ for he shall find who seeks.”
This is the ancient stock by Wesley led ;
They the pure body, he the reverend head :
All innovation they with dread decline,
Their John the elder, was the John divine.
Hence, still their moving prayer, the melting hymn,
The varied accent, and the active limb ;
Hence that implicit faith in Satan’s might,
And their own matchless prowess in the fight.
In every act they see that lurking foe,
Let loose awhile, about the world to go ;
A dragon flying round the earth, to kill
The heavenly hope, and prompt the carnal will ;
Whom sainted knights attack in sinners’ cause,
And force the wounded victim from his paws ;
Who but for them would man’s whole race subdue,
For not a hireling will the foe pursue.

“ Show me one churchman who will rise and pray
“ Through half the night, though lab’ring all the day,
“ Always abounding—show me him, I say :”—

Thus cries the preacher, and he adds, “ their sheep
“ Satan devours at leisure as they sleep.
“ Not so with us; we drive him from the fold,
“ For ever barking and for ever bold:
“ While they securely slumber, all his schemes
“ Take full effect,—the devil never dreams:
“ Watchful and changeful through the world he goes,
“ And few can trace this deadliest of their foes;
“ But I detect, and at his work surprise
“ The subtle serpent under all disguise.

“ Thus to man’s soul the foe of souls will speak,
“—‘ A saint elect, you can have nought to seek;
“ ‘ Why all this labour in so plain a case,
“ ‘ Such care to run, when certain of the race?’
“ All this he urges to the carnal will,
“ He knows you’re slothful, and would have you still:
“ Be this your answer,—‘ Satan, I will keep
“ ‘ Still on the watch till you are laid asleep.’
“ Thus too the Christian’s progress he’ll retard:—
“ ‘ The gates of mercy are for ever barr’d;
“ ‘ And that with bolts so driven and so stout,
“ ‘ Ten thousand workmen cannot wrench them out.’
“ To this deceit you have but one reply,—
“ Give to the father of all lies, the lie.

“ A sister’s weakness he’ll by fits surprise,
“ His her wild laughter, his her piteous cries;

“ And should a pastor at her side attend,
“ He’ll use her organs to abuse her friend:
“ These are possessions—unbelieving wits
“ Impute them all to nature: ‘ They’re her fits,
“ ‘ Caused by commotions in the nerves and brains ;’—
“ Vain talk! but they’ll be fitted for their pains.

“ These are in part the ills the foe has wrought,
“ And these the churchman thinks not worth his
thought;

“ They bid the troubled try for peace and rest,
“ Compose their minds, and be no more distress’d;
“ As well might they command the passive shore
“ To keep secure, and be o’erflow’d no more;
“ To the wrong subject is their skill applied,—
“ To act like workmen, they should stem the tide.

“ These are the church-physicians; they are paid
“ With noble fees for their advice and aid;
“ Yet know they not the inward pulse to feel,
“ To ease the anguish, or the wound to heal.

“ With the sick sinner, thus their work begins,

“ ‘ Do you repent you of your former sins?

“ ‘ Will you amend if you revive and live?

“ ‘ And, pardon seeking, will you pardon give?

“ ‘ Have you belief in what your Lord has done,

“ ‘ And are you thankful?—all is well, my son.’

“ A way far different ours—we thus surprise

“ A soul with questions, and demand replies;

“ ‘How dropp’d you first,’ I ask, ‘the legal yoke?’
“ ‘What the first word the living Witness spoke?’
“ ‘Perceived you thunders roar and lightnings shine,
“ ‘And tempests gathering ere the birth divine?’
“ ‘Did fire, and storm, and earthquake all appear
“ ‘Before that still small voice, *What dost thou here?*
“ ‘Hast thou by day and night, and soon and late,
“ ‘Waited and watch’d before Admission-gate;
“ ‘And so a pilgrim and a soldier pass’d
“ ‘To Sion’s hill through battle and through blast?’
“ ‘Then in thy way didst thou thy foe attack,
“ ‘And mad’st thou proud Apollyon turn his back?’
“ ‘Heart-searching things are these, and shake the
mind,
“ ‘Yea, like the rustling of a mighty wind.
“ ‘Thus would I ask:—‘Nay, let me question now,
“ ‘How sink my sayings in your bosoms? how?
“ ‘Feel you a quickening? drops the subject deep?’
“ ‘Stupid and stony, no! you’re all asleep;
“ ‘Listless and lazy, waiting for a close,
“ ‘As if at church—Do I allow repose?’
“ ‘Am I a legal minister? do I
“ ‘With form or rubrick, rule or rite comply?’
“ ‘Then whence this quiet, tell me, I beseech?’
“ ‘One might believe you heard your rector preach,
“ ‘Or his assistant dreamer:—Oh! return,
“ ‘Ye times of burning, when the heart would burn;

“ ‘ Now hearts are ice, and you, my freezing fold,
“ ‘ Have spirits sunk and sad, and bosoms stony-cold.’
“ Oh! now again for those prevailing powers,
“ Which once began this mighty work of ours;
“ When the wide field, God’s temple, was the place,
“ And birds flew by to catch a breath of grace;
“ When ’mid his timid friends and threat’ning foes,
“ Our zealous chief as Paul at Athens rose:
“ When with infernal spite and knotty clubs
“ The ill-one arm’d his scoundrels and his scrubs;
“ And there were flying all around the spot
“ Brands at the preacher, but they touch’d him not;
“ Stakes brought to smite him, threaten’d in his cause,
“ And tongues, attuned to curses, roar’d applause;
“ Louder and louder grew his awful tones,
“ Sobbing and sighs were heard, and rueful groans;
“ Soft women fainted, prouder man express’d
“ Wonder and wo, and butchers smote the breast;
“ Eyes wept, ears tingled; stiff’ning on each head,
“ The hair drew back, and Satan howl’d and fled.
“ In that soft season when the gentle breeze
“ Rises all round, and swells by slow degrees;
“ Till tempests gather, when through all the sky
“ The thunders rattle, and the lightnings fly;
“ When rain in torrents wood and vale deform,
“ And all is horror, hurricane, and storm:

“ So, when the preacher in that glorious time,
“ Than clouds more melting, more than storm sublime,
“ Dropp’d the new word, there came a charm around;
“ Tremors and terrors rose upon the sound;
“ The stubborn spirits by his force he broke,
“ As the fork’d lightning rives the knotted oak:
“ Fear, hope, dismay, all signs of shame or grace,
“ Chain’d every foot, or featured every face;
“ Then took his sacred trump a louder swell,
“ And now they groan’d, they sicken’d, and they fell;
“ Again he sounded, and we heard the cry
“ Of the word-wounded, as about to die;
“ Further and further spread the conquering word,
“ As loud he cried—‘ the battle of the Lord.’
“ Ev’n those apart who were the sound denied,
“ Fell down instinctive, and in spirit died.
“ Nor staid he yet—his eye, his frown, his speech,
“ His very gesture had a power to teach;
“ With outstretch’d arms, strong voice and piercing
 call,
“ He won the field, and made the Dragons fall;
“ And thus in triumph took his glorious way,
“ Through scenes of horror, terror, and dismay.”

"So when the preacher in that glorious time,
 "These chords more jangling, more than storm-singing,
 "Drooped the new word, there came a thorn around
 "Tongues and hearts rose upon the sound;
 "The strophe spirals by his tower he broke,
 "As the north lightning rive the knotted oak:
 "Fear, hope, dismay, all signs of shame or grace,
 "I heard every foot, or leashed every face,
 "Then took the sacred trumpet a louder swell,
 "And now they gazed, they sickened, and they fell;
 "Again he sounded, and we heard the cry great and low,
 "For the word wounded, as sharp to strike as sword;
 "Further and further spread the conquering word,
 "As loud he cried—'the battle of the Lord is won';
 "Even those apart who were the sound derided,
 "Fell from instinctive, and in spirit quickened;
 "Nor stand he yet—his type, his throne, his scepter;
 "His very gesture had a power to teach, his voice
 "With untold drama, strong voice and piercing;
 "He said, 'I love you, and I love you all;
 "He won the field, and made the dragons fall;
 "And these in triumph took his glorious way, he said,
 "Though seeds of power, terror, and dismay;
 "Yet against all his power, all his commandment all;
 "Which also has been known to him and W,
 "I have seen, scattered, scattered in the dust."

NOTES TO LETTER IV.

Note 1, page 55, line 12.

May those excel by Solway-Moss destroy'd.

For an account of this extraordinary and interesting event, I refer my readers to the Journals of the year 1772.

Note 2, page 61, line 16.

They will not study, and they dare not fight.

Some may object to this assertion; to whom I beg leave to answer, that I do not use the word *fight* in the sense of the Jew Mendoza.

Note 3, page 62, line 20.

Regret thy misery, and lament thy crimes.

See the Book of Deuteronomy, chapter xxvii. and various other places.

Note 4, page 63, line 2.

Nor think of Julian's boast and Julian's fate.

His boast, that he would rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem; his fate (whatever becomes of the miraculous part of the story), that he died before the foundation was laid.

Note 5, page 64, line 24.

Samson is grace, and carries all alone.

Whoever has attended to the books or preaching of these enthusiastic people, must have observed much of this kind of absurd and foolish application of scripture history; it seems to them as reasoning.

THE BOROUGH.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER V.

ELECTIONS.

Say then which class to greater folly stoop,
The great in promise, or the poor in hope?

Be brave, for your leader is brave, and vows reformation;
there shall be in England seven halfpenny loaves sold for a
penny; and the three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops. I
will make it felony to drink small beer: all shall eat and
drink on my score, and I will apparel them all in one livery,
that they may agree like brothers; and they shall all worship
me as their lord.

Shakspeare's Henry VI.

The Evils of the Contest, and how in part to be avoided—The Miseries endured by a Friend of the Candidate—The various Liberties taken with him, who has no personal Interest in the Success—The unreasonable Expectations of Voters—The Censures of the opposing Party—The Vices as well as Follies shown in such Time of Contest—Plans and Cunning of Electors—Evils which remain after the Decision, opposed in vain by the Efforts of the Friendly, and of the Successful; among whom is the Mayor—Story of his Advancement till he was raised to the Government of the Borough—These Evils not to be placed in Balance with the Liberty of the People, but are yet Subjects of just Complaint.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER V.

THE ELECTION.

YES, our Election's past, and we've been free,
Somewhat as madmen without keepers be;
And such desire of freedom has been shown,
That both the parties wish'd her all their own:
All our free smiths and cobblers in the town
Were loth to lay such pleasant freedom down;
To put the bludgeon and cockade aside,
And let us pass unhurt and undefied.

True! you might then your party's sign produce,
And so escape with only half th' abuse;
With half the danger as you walk'd along,
With rage and threat'ning but from half the throng:
This you might do, and not your fortune mend,
For where you lost a foe, you gain'd a friend;
And to distress you, vex you, and expose,
Election-friends are worse than any foes;

The party-curse is with the canvass past,
But party-friendship, for your grief, will last.

Friends of all kinds, the civil and the rude,
Who humbly wish, or boldly dare t' intrude;
These beg or take a liberty to come,
(Friends should be free,) and make your house their
home;

They know that warmly you their cause espouse,
And come to make their boastings and their bows:
You scorn their manners, you their words mistrust,
But you must hear them, and they know you must.

One plainly sees a friendship firm and true,
Between the noble candidate and you;
So humbly begs (and states at large the case),
“You'll think of Bobby and the little place.”

Stifling his shame by drink, a wretch will come,
And prate your wife and daughter from the room:
In pain you hear him, and at heart despise,
Yet with heroic mind your pangs disguise;
And still in patience to the sot attend,
To show what man can bear to serve a friend.

One enters hungry—not to be denied,
And takes his place and jokes—“We're of a side.”
Yet worse, the proser who, upon the strength
Of his one vote, has tales of three hours' length;
This sorry rogue you bear, yet with surprise
Start at his oaths, and sicken at his lies.

Then comes there one, and tells in friendly way,
What the opponents in their anger say;
All that through life has vex'd you, all abuse,
Will this kind friend in pure regard produce;
And having through your own offences run,
Adds (as appendage) what your friends have done.

Has any female cousin made a trip
To Gretna-Green, or more vexatious slip?
Has your wife's brother, or your uncle's son
Done aught amiss, or is he thought t' have done?
Is there of all your kindred some who lack
Vision direct, or have a gibbous back?
From your unlucky name may quips and puns
Be made by these upbraiding Goths and Huns?
To some great public character have you
Assign'd the fame to worth and talents due,
Proud of your praise?—In this, in any case,
Where the brute-spirit may affix disgrace,
These friends will smiling bring it, and the while
You silent sit, and practise for a smile.

Vain of their power, and of their value sure,
They nearly guess the tortures you endure;
Nor spare one pang—for they perceive your heart
Goes with the cause; you'd die before you'd start;
Do what they may, they're sure you'll not offend
Men who have pledged their honours to your friend.

Those friends indeed, who start as in a race,
May love the sport, and laugh at this disgrace;
They have in view the glory and the prize,
Nor heed the dirty steps by which they rise:
But we their poor associates lose the fame,
Though more than partners in the toil and shame.

Were this the whole; and did the time produce
But shame and toil, but riot and abuse;
We might be then from serious griefs exempt,
And view the whole with pity and contempt.
Alas! but here the vilest passions rule;
It is Seduction's, is Temptation's school;
Where vices mingle in the oddest ways,
The grossest slander and the dirtiest praise;
Flattery enough to make the vainest sick,
And clumsy stratagem, and scoundrel trick:
Nay more, your anger and contempt to cause,
These, while they fish for profit, claim applause;
Bribed, bought and bound, they banish shame and fear;
Tell you they're staunch, and have a soul sincere;
Then talk of honour, and if doubt's express'd,
Show where it lies, and smite upon the breast.

Among these worthies, some at first declare
For whom they vote: he then has most to spare;
Others hang off—when coming to the post
Is spurring time, and then he'll spare the most:

While some demurring, wait, and find at last
The bidding languish, and the market pass'd;
These will affect all bribery to condemn,
And be it Satan laughs, he laughs at them.

Some too are pious—One desired the Lord
To teach him where “to drop his little word;
“To lend his vote, where it will profit best;
“Promotion came not from the east or west;
“But as their freedom had promoted some,
“He should be glad to know which way ’twould come.
“It was a naughty world, and where to sell
“His precious charge, was more than he could tell.”

“But you succeeded?”—true, at mighty cost,
And our good friend, I fear, will think he’s lost:
Inns, horses, chaises, dinners, balls and notes;
What fill’d their purses, and what drench’d their throats;
The private pension, and indulgent lease,—
Have all been granted to these friends who fleece;
Friends who will hang like burs upon his coat,
And boundless judge the value of a vote.

And though the terrors of the time be pass’d,
There still remain the scatterings of the blast;
The boughs are parted that entwined before,
And ancient harmony exists no more;
The gusts of wrath our peaceful seats deform,
And sadly flows the sighing of the storm:

Those who have gain'd are sorry for the gloom,
But they who lost, unwilling peace should come;
There open envy, here suppress'd delight,
Yet live till time shall better thoughts excite,
And so prepare us by a six-years' truce,
Again for riot, insult, and abuse.

Our worthy mayor, on the victorious part,
Cries out for peace, and cries with all his heart;
He, civil creature! ever does his best,
To banish wrath from every voter's breast;
"For where," says he, with reason strong and plain,
"Where is the profit? what will anger gain?"
His short stout person he is wont to brace
In good brown broad-cloth, edged with two-inch lace,
When in his seat; and still the coat seems new,
Preserved by common use of seaman's blue.

He was a fisher from his earliest day,
And placed his nets within the Borough's bay;
Where by his skates, his herrings, and his soles,
He lived, nor dream'd of corporation-doles;⁽¹⁾
But toiling saved, and saving, never ceased
Till he had box'd up twelve score pounds at least:
He knew not money's power, but judged it best
Safe in his trunk to let his treasure rest;
Yet to a friend complain'd: "Sad charge, to keep
"So many pounds, and then I cannot sleep:"

“Then put it out,” replied the friend:—“What, give
“My money up? why then I could not live:”
“Nay, but for interest place it in his hands,
“Who’ll give you mortgage on his house or lands.”
“Oh but,” said Daniel, “that’s a dangerous plan,
“He may be robb’d like any other man:”
“Still he is bound, and you may be at rest,
“More safe the money than within your chest;
“And you’ll receive, from all deductions clear,
“Five pounds for every hundred, every year.”
“What good in that?” quoth Daniel, “for ’tis plain,
“If part I take, there can but part remain:”
“What! you, my friend, so skill’d in gainful things,
“Have you to learn what interest money brings?”
“Not so,” said Daniel, “perfectly I know,
“He’s the most interest who has most to show.”
“True! and he’ll show the more, the more he lends;
“Thus he his weight and consequence extends;
“For they who borrow must restore each sum,
“And pay for use—What, Daniel, art thou dumb?”
For much amazed was that good man—“Indeed!
Said he with glad’ning eye, “will money breed?
“How have I lived? I grieve, with all my heart,
“For my late knowledge in this precious art:—
“Five pounds for every hundred will he give?
“And then the hundred?—I begin to live.”—

So he began, and other means he found,
As he went on, to multiply a pound:
Though blind so long to interest, all allow
That no man better understands it now:
Him in our body-corporate we chose,
And once among us, he above us rose;
Stepping from post to post, he reach'd the chair,
And there he now reposes—that's the mayor.

But 'tis not he, 'tis not the kinder few,
The mild, the good, who can our peace renew;
A peevish humour swells in every eye,
The warm are angry, and the cool are shy;
There is no more the social board at whist,
The good old partners are with scorn dismiss'd;
No more with dog and lantern comes the maid,
To guide the mistress when the rubber's play'd;
Sad shifts are made lest ribbons blue and green
Should at one table, at one time be seen:
On care and merit none will now rely,
'Tis party sells, what party-friends must buy;
The warmest burgess wears a bodger's coat,
And fashion gains less int'rest than a vote;
Uncheck'd the vintner still his poison vends,
For he too votes, and can command his friends.

But this admitted; be it still agreed,
'These ill effects from noble cause proceed;

Though like some vile excrescences they be,
The tree they spring from is a sacred tree,
And its true produce, strength and liberty.

Yet if we could th' attendant ills suppress,
If we could make the sum of mischief less;
If we could warm and angry men persuade
No more man's common comforts to invade;
And that old ease and harmony re-seat
In all our meetings, so in joy to meet;
Much would of glory to the Muse ensue,
And our good vicar would have less to do.

NOTE TO LETTER V.

Note 1, page 84, line 20.

He lived, nor dream'd of corporation-doles.

I am informed that some explanation is here necessary, though I am ignorant for what class of my readers it can be required. Some corporate bodies have actual property, as appears by their receiving rents ; and they obtain money on the admission of members into their society : this they may lawfully share perhaps. There are, moreover, other doles, of still greater value, of which it is not necessary for me to explain the nature, or to inquire into the legality.

NOTE TO LETTER 7.

Page 1, line 20.

The word, "the" is not necessary.

I am informed that your explanation is not necessary, though I am ignorant of what you mean. It can be explained. Some companies have been formed, as appears by their respective names; and they obtain money in the subscription of members into their society; this they pay weekly share holders. There are, however, other kinds of will grant value of which it is not necessary for me to explain the nature, or to register into the ledger.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER VI.

PROFESSIONS—LAW.

Quid leges sine moribus
Vanæ proficiunt?

Horace.

Væ! misero mihi, mea nunc facinora
Aperiuntur, clam quæ speravi fore.

Manilius.

THE BOROUGH

Trades and Professions of every Kind to be found in the Borough
—Its Seamen and Soldiers—Law, the Danger of the Subject
—Coddington's Offence—Attorneys increased; their splendid
Appearance, how supported—Some worthy Exceptions—
Spirit of Litigation, how stirred up—A Boy articled as a
Clerk; his Ideas—How this Profession perverts the Judgment
—Actions appear through this Medium in a false Light—
Success from honest Application—Archer a worthy Character
—Swallow a Character of different Kind—His Origin, Pro-
gress, Success, &c.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER VI.

PROFESSIONS—LAW.

“TRADES and Professions”—these are themes the
Muse,

Left to her freedom, would forbear to choose;
But to our Borough they in truth belong,
And we, perforce, must take them in our song.

Be it then known that we can boast of these
In all denominations, ranks, degrees;
All who our numerous wants through life supply,
Who soothe us sick, attend us when we die,
Or for the dead their various talents try.
Then have we those who live by secret arts,
By hunting fortunes, and by stealing hearts;
Or who by nobler means themselves advance;
Or who subsist by charity and chance.

Say, of our native heroes shall I boast,
Born in our streets, to thunder on our coast,

Our Borough-seamen? Could the timid Muse
More patriot-ardour in their breasts infuse;
Or could she paint their merit or their skill,
She wants not love, alacrity, or will;
But needless all, that ardour is their own,
And for their deeds, themselves have made them known.

Soldiers in arms! Defenders of our soil!
Who from destruction save us; who from spoil
Protect the sons of peace, who traffic, or who toil;
Would I could duly praise you; that each deed
Your foes might honour, and your friends might read:
This too is needless; you've imprinted well
Your powers, and told what I should feebly tell:
Beside, a Muse like mine, to satire prone,
Would fail in themes where there is praise alone.
—Law shall I sing, or what to Law belongs?
Alas! there may be danger in such songs;
A foolish rhyme, 'tis said, a trifling thing,
The law found treason, for it touch'd the king.
But kings have mercy, in these happy times,
Or surely *one* had suffer'd for his rhymes;
Our glorious Edwards and our Henrys bold;
So touch'd, had kept the reprobate in hold;
But he escaped,—nor fear, thank Heav'n, have I,
Who love my king, for such offence to die.
But I am taught the danger would be much,
If these poor lines should one attorney touch—

(One of those *limbs* of law who're always here;
The *heads* come down to guide them twice a year.)
I might not swing indeed, but he in sport
Would whip a rhymer on from court to court;
Stop him in each, and make him pay for all
The long proceedings in that dreaded Hall:—
Then let my numbers flow discreetly on,
Warn'd by the fate of luckless Coddington*,
Lest some *attorney* (pardon me the name)
Should wound a poor *solicitor* for fame.

One man of law in George the Second's reign
Was all our frugal fathers would maintain;
He too was kept for forms; a man of peace,
To frame a contract, or to draw a lease:
He had a clerk, with whom he used to write
All the day long, with whom he drank at night;
Spare was his visage, moderate his bill,
And he so kind, men doubted of his skill.

Who thinks of this, with some amazement sees,
For one so poor, three flourishing at ease;
Nay, one in splendour!—see that mansion tall,
That lofty door, the far-resounding hall;
Well-furnish'd rooms, plate shining on the board,
Gay liveried lads, and cellar proudly stored:

* The account of Coddington occurs in “*The Mirrour for Magistrates*:” he suffered in the reign of Richard III.

Then say how comes it that such fortunes crown
These sons of strife, these terrors of the town?

Lo! that small office! there th' incautious guest
Goes blindfold in, and that maintains the rest;
There in his web, th' observant spider lies,
And peers about for fat intruding flies;
Doubtful at first, he hears the distant hum,
And feels them flutt'ring as they nearer come;
They buzz and blink, and doubtfully they tread
On the strong birdlime of the utmost thread;
But when they're once entangled by the gin,
With what an eager clasp he draws them in;
Nor shall they 'scape, till after long delay,
And all that sweetens life is drawn away.

“Nay, this,” you cry, “is common-place, the tale
“Of petty tradesmen o'er their evening-ale;
“There are who, living by the legal pen,
“Are held in honour,—‘honourable men.’”

Doubtless—there are who hold manorial courts,
Or whom the trust of powerful friends supports;
Or who, by labouring through a length of time,
Have pick'd their way, unsullied by a crime.
These are the few—in this, in every place,
Fix the litigious rupture-stirring race;
Who to contention as to trade are led,
To whom dispute and strife are bliss and bread.

There is a doubtful pauper, and we think
'Tis not with us to give him meat and drink;
There is a child, and 'tis not mighty clear
Whether the mother lived with us a year:
A road's indicted, and our seniors doubt
If in our proper boundary or without:
But what says our attorney? He our friend
Tells us 'tis just and manly to contend.

“What! to a neighbouring parish yield your cause,
“While you have money, and the nation laws?
“What! lose without a trial, that which tried,
“May—nay it must—be given on our side?
“All men of spirit would contend; such men
“Than lose a pound would rather hazard ten.
“What, be imposed on? No! a British soul
“Despises imposition, hates control;
“The law is open; let them, if they dare,
“Support their cause; the Borough need not spare:
“All I advise is vigour and good-will:
“Is it agreed then?—Shall I file a bill?”

The trader, grazier, merchant, priest and all,
Whose sons aspiring, to professions call,
Choose from their lads some bold and subtle boy,
And judge him fitted for this grave employ:
Him a keen old practitioner admits,
To write five years and exercise his wits:

The youth has heard—it is in fact his creed—
Mankind dispute, that lawyers may be fee'd :
Jails, bailiffs, writs, all terms and threats of law,
Grow now familiar as once top and taw ;
Rage, hatred, fear, the mind's severer ills,
All bring employment, all augment his bills :
As feels the surgeon for the mangled limb,
The mangled mind is but a job for him ;
Thus taught to think, these legal reasoners draw
Morals and maxims from their views of law ;
They cease to judge by precepts taught in schools,
By man's plain sense, or by religious rules ;
No ! nor by law itself, in truth discern'd,
But as its statutes may be warp'd and turn'd :
How they should judge of man ; his word and deed,
They in their books and not their bosoms read :
Of some good act you speak with just applause,
“ No ! no ! ” says he, “ 'twould be a losing cause : ”
Blame you some tyrant's deed ?—he answers “ Nay,
“ He'll get a verdict ; heed you what you say.”
Thus to conclusions from examples led,
The heart resigns all judgment to the head ;
Law, law alone for ever kept in view,
His measures guides, and rules his conscience too ;
Of ten commandments, he confesses three
Are yet in force, and tells you which they be,

As law instructs him, thus : “ Your neighbour’s wife
“ You must not take, his chattels, nor his life;
“ Break these decrees, for damage you must pay;
“ These you must reverence, and the rest—you may.”

Law was design’d to keep a state in peace;
To punish robbery, that wrong might cease;
To be impregnable; a constant fort,
To which the weak and injured might resort:
But these perverted minds its force employ,
Not to protect mankind, but to annoy;
And long as ammunition can be found,
Its lightning flashes and its thunders sound.

Or law with lawyers is an ample still,
Wrought by the passions’ heat with chymic skill;
While the fire burns, the gains are quickly made,
And freely flow the profits of the trade;
Nay, when the fierceness fails, these artists blow
The dying fire, and make the embers glow,
As long as they can make the smaller profits flow;
At length the process of itself will stop,
When they perceive they’ve drawn out every drop.

Yet I repeat, there are, who nobly strive
To keep the sense of moral worth alive;
Men who would starve, ere meanly deign to live
On what deception and chican’ry give;

And these at length succeed; they have their strife,
Their apprehensions, stops, and rubs in life;
But honour, application, care, and skill,
Shall bend opposing fortune to their will.

Of such is Archer, he who keeps in awe
Contending parties by his threats of law:
He, roughly honest, has been long a guide
In Borough-business, on the conquering side;
And seen so much of both sides, and so long,
He thinks the bias of man's mind goes wrong:
Thus, though he's friendly, he is still severe,
Surly though kind, suspiciously sincere:
So much he's seen of baseness in the mind,
That, while a friend to man, he scorns mankind;
He knows the human heart, and sees with dread,
By slight temptation, how the strong are led;
He knows how interest can asunder rend
The bond of parent, master, guardian, friend,
To form a new and a degrading tie
'Twixt needy vice and tempting villany.
Sound in himself, yet when such flaws appear,
He doubts of all, and learns that self to fear:
For where so dark the moral view is grown,
A timid conscience trembles for her own;
The pitchy taint of general vice is such
As daubs the fancy, and you dread the touch.

Far unlike him was one in former times,
Famed for the spoil he gather'd by his crimes ;
Who, while his brethren nibbling held their prey,
He like an eagle seized and bore the whole away.

Swallow, a poor attorney, brought his boy
Up at his desk, and gave him his employ ;
He would have bound him to an honest trade,
Could preparations have been duly made.
The clerkship ended, both the sire and son
Together did what business could be done ;
Sometimes they'd luck to stir up small disputes
Among their friends, and raise them into suits :
Though close and hard, the father was content
With this resource, now old and indolent :
But his young Swallow, gaping and alive
To fiercer feelings, was resolved to thrive :—
“ Father,” he said, “ but little can they win,
“ Who hunt in couples where the game is thin ;
“ Let's part in peace, and each pursue his gain
“ Where it may start—our love may yet remain.”
The parent growl'd, he couldn't think that love
Made the young cockatrice his den remove ;
But, taught by habit, he the truth suppress'd,
Forced a frank look, and said he “ thought it best.”
Not long they'd parted ere dispute arose ;
The game they hunted quickly made them foes :

Some house, the father by his art had won,
Seem'd a fit cause of contest to the son,
Who raised a claimant, and then found a way
By a staunch witness to secure his prey.
The people cursed him, but in times of need
Trusted in one so certain to succeed:
By law's dark by-ways he had stored his mind
With wicked knowledge, how to cheat mankind.
Few are the freeholds in our ancient town;
A copy-right from heir to heir came down,
From whence some heat arose, when there was doubt
In point of heirship; but the fire went out,
Till our attorney had the art to raise
The dying spark, and blow it to a blaze:
For this he now began his friends to treat;
His way to starve them was to make them eat,
And drink oblivious draughts—to his applause
It must be said, he never starved a cause;
He'd roast and boil'd upon his board; the boast
Of half his victims was his boil'd and roast;
And these at every hour:—he seldom took
Aside his client, till he'd praised his cook;
Nor to an office led him, there in pain
To give his story and go out again;
But first, the brandy and the chine were seen,
And then the business came by starts between.

“ Well, if ’tis so, the house to you belongs ;
“ But have you money to redress these wrongs ?
“ Nay, look not sad, my friend ; if you ’re correct,
“ You ’ll find the friendship that you ’d not expect.”

If right the man, the house was Swallow’s own ;
If wrong, his kindness and good-will were shown :
“ Rogue !” “ Villain !” “ Scoundrel !” cried the losers
all ;

He let them cry, for what would that recall ?
At length he left us, took a village seat,
And like a vulture look’d abroad for meat ;
The Borough-booty, give it all its praise,
Had only served the appetite to raise ;
But if from simple heirs he drew their land,
He might a noble feast at will command ;
Still he proceeded by his former rules,
His bait, their pleasures, when he fish’d for fools ;—
Flagons and haunches on his board were placed,
And subtle avarice look’d like thoughtless waste :
Most of his friends, though youth from him had fled,
Were young, were minors, of their sires in dread ;
Or those whom widow’d mothers kept in bounds,
And check’d their generous rage for steeds and
hounds ;
Or such as travell’d ’cross the land to view
A Christian’s conflict with a boxing Jew :

Some too had run upon Newmarket heath
With so much speed that they were out of breath;
Others had tasted claret, till they now
To humbler port would turn, and knew not how.
All these for favours would to Swallow run,
Who never sought their thanks for all he'd done;
He kindly took them by the hand, then bow'd
Politely low, and thus his love avow'd—
(For he'd a way that many judged polite,
A cunning dog—he'd fawn before he'd bite)—

“ Observe, my friends, the frailty of our race
“ When age unmans us—let me state a case:
“ There's our friend Rupert—we shall soon redress
“ His present evil—drink to our success—
“ I flatter not; but did you ever see
“ Limbs better turn'd? a prettier boy than he?
“ His senses all acute, his passions such
“ As nature gave—she never does too much;
“ His the bold wish the cup of joy to drain,
“ And strength to bear it without qualm or pain.

“ Now view his father as he dozing lies,
“ Whose senses wake not when he opes his eyes;
“ Who slips and shuffles when he means to walk,
“ And lisps and gabbles if he tries to talk;
“ Feeling he's none, he could as soon destroy
“ The earth itself, as aught it holds enjoy;

“ A nurse attends him to lay straight his limbs,
“ Present his gruel, and respect his whims :
“ Now shall this dotard from our hero hold
“ His lands and lordships ? Shall he hide his gold ?
“ That which he cannot use, and dare not show,
“ And will not give—why longer should he owe ?
“ Yet, ’t would be murder should we snap the locks,
“ And take the thing he worships from the box ;
“ So let him dote and dream : but, till he die,
“ Shall not our generous heir receive supply ?
“ For ever sitting on the river’s brink,
“ And ever thirsty, shall he fear to drink ?
“ The means are simple, let him only wish,
“ Then say he’s willing, and I’ll fill his dish.”

They all applauded, and not least the boy,
Who now replied, “ It fill’d his heart with joy
“ To find he needed not deliv’rance crave
“ Of death, or wish the justice in the grave ;
“ Who, while he spent, would every art retain,
“ Of luring home the scatter’d gold again ;
“ Just as a fountain gaily spirts and plays
“ With what returns in still and secret ways.”

Short was the dream of bliss ; he quickly found,
His father’s acres all were Swallow’s ground.
Yet to those arts would other heroes lend
A willing ear, and Swallow was their friend ;

Ever successful, some began to think
That Satan help'd him to his pen and ink;
And shrewd suspicions ran about the place,
“There was a compact”—I must leave the case.
But of the parties, had the fiend been one,
The business could not have been speedier done:
Still when a man has angled day and night,
The silliest gudgeons will refuse to bite:
So Swallow tried no more; but if they came
To seek his friendship, that remain'd the same:
Thus he retired in peace, and some would say
He'd balk'd his partner, and had learn'd to pray.
To this some zealots lent an ear, and sought
How Swallow felt, then said “a change is wrought:”
’Twas true there wanted all the signs of grace,
But there were strong professions in their place;
Then too, the less that men from him expect,
The more the praise to the converting sect;
He had not yet subscribed to all their creed,
Nor own'd a call, but he confess'd the need:
His acquiescent speech, his gracious look,
That pure attention, when the brethren spoke,
Was all contrition,—he had felt the wound,
And with confession would again be sound.

True, Swallow's board had still the sumptuous treat;
But could they blame? the warmest zealots eat:

He drank—'twas needful his poor nerves to brace;
He swore—'twas habit; he was grieved—'twas grace:
What could they do a new-born zeal to nurse?

“ His wealth's undoubted—let him hold our purse;
“ He'll add his bounty, and the house we'll raise
“ Hard by the church, and gather all her strays;
“ We'll watch her sinners as they home retire,
“ And pluck the brands from the devouring fire.”

Alas! such speech was but an empty boast;
The good men reckon'd, but without their host;
Swallow, delighted, took the trusted store,
And own'd the sum: they did not ask for more,
Till more was needed; when they call'd for aid—
And had it?—No, their agent was afraid;
“ Could he but know to whom he should refund,
“ He would most gladly—nay, he'd go beyond;
“ But when such numbers claim'd, when some were
gone,

“ And others going—he must hold it on;
“ The Lord would help them”—Loud their anger grew,
And while they threat'ning from his door withdrew,
He bow'd politely low, and bade them all adieu.

But lives the man by whom such deeds are done?
Yes, many such—but Swallow's race is run;
His name is lost,—for though his sons have name,
It is not his, they all escape the shame;

Nor is there vestige now of all he had,
His means are wasted, for his heir was mad:
Still we of Swallow as a monster speak,
A hard bad man, who prey'd upon the weak.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER VII.

PROFESSIONS—PHYSIC.

Finirent multi letho mala; credula vitam
Spes alit, et melius cras fore semper ait.

Tibullus.

He fell to juggle, cant, and cheat——
For as those fowls that live in water
Are never wet, he did but smatter;
Whate'er he labour'd to appear,
His understanding still was clear.
A paltry wretch he had, half-starved,
That him in place of zany served.

Butler's Hudibras.

The Worth and Excellence of the true Physician—Merit, not the sole Cause of Success—Modes of advancing Reputation—Motives of medical Men for publishing their Works—The great Evil of Quackery—Present State of advertising Quacks—Their Hazard—Some fail, and why—Causes of Success—How Men of Understanding are prevailed upon to have Recourse to Empirics, and to permit their Names to be advertised—Evils of Quackery : to nervous Females : to Youth : to Infants—History of an advertising Empiric, &c.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER VII.

PROFESSIONS—PHYSIC.

NEXT, to a graver tribe we turn our view,
And yield the praise to worth and science due;
But this with serious words and sober style,
For these are friends with whom we seldom smile:
Helpers of men* they're call'd, and we confess
Theirs the deep study, theirs the lucky guess;
We own that numbers join with care and skill,
A temperate judgment, a devoted will;
Men who suppress their feelings, but who feel
The painful symptoms they delight to heal;
Patient in all their trials, they sustain
The starts of passion, the reproach of pain;
With hearts affected, but with looks serene,
Intent they wait through all the solemn scene;

* *Opiferque per orbem dicor.*

Glad if a hope should rise from nature's strife,
To aid their skill and save the lingering life;
But this must virtue's generous effort be,
And spring from nobler motives than a fee:
To the physicians of the soul, and these,
Turn the distress'd for safety, hope, and ease.

But as physicians of that nobler kind
Have their warm zealots, and their sectaries blind;
So among these for knowledge most renown'd,
Are dreamers strange, and stubborn bigots found:
Some, too, admitted to this honour'd name,
Have, without learning, found a way to fame;
And some by learning—young physicians write,
To set their merit in the fairest light;
With them a treatise is a bait that draws
Approving voices—'tis to gain applause,
And to exalt them in the public view,
More than a life of worthy toil could do.
When 'tis proposed to make the man renown'd,
In every age, convenient doubts abound;
Convenient themes in every period start,
Which he may treat with all the pomp of art;
Curious conjectures he may always make,
And either side of dubious questions take:
He may a system broach, or, if he please,
Start new opinions of an old disease;

Or may some simple in the woodland trace,
And be its patron, till it runs its race;
As rustic damsels from their woods are won,
And live in splendour till their race be run;
It weighs not much on what their powers be shown,
When all his purpose is to make them known.

To show the world what long experience gains,
Requires not courage, though it calls for pains;
But at life's outset to inform mankind,
Is a bold effort of a valiant mind.

The great good man, for noblest cause, displays
What many labours taught, and many days;
These sound instruction from experience give,
The others show us how they mean to live;
That they have genius, and they hope mankind
Will to its efforts be no longer blind.

There are beside, whom powerful friends advance,
Whom fashion favours, person, patrons, chance:
And merit sighs to see a fortune made
By daring rashness or by dull parade.

But these are trifling evils; there is one
Which walks uncheck'd, and triumphs in the sun:
There was a time, when we beheld the quack,
On public stage, the licensed trade attack;
He made his labour'd speech with poor parade;
And then a laughing zany lent him aid:

Smiling we pass'd him, but we felt the while
Pity so much, that soon we ceased to smile;
Assured that fluent speech and flow'ry vest
Disguised the troubles of a man distress'd.

But now our quacks are gamesters, and they play
With craft and skill to ruin and betray;
With monstrous promise they delude the mind,
And thrive on all that tortures human-kind.

Void of all honour, avaricious, rash,
The daring tribe compound their boasted trash—
Tincture or syrup, lotion, drop or pill;
All tempt the sick to trust the lying bill;
And twenty names of cobblers turn'd to squires,
Aid the bold language of these blushless liars.
There are among them those who cannot read,
And yet they'll buy a patent, and succeed;
Will dare to promise dying sufferers aid,
For who, when dead, can threaten or upbraid?
With cruel avarice still they recommend
More draughts, more syrup to the journey's end:
“I feel it not;”—“Then take it every hour:”
“It makes me worse;”—“Why then it shows its
power:”

“I fear to die;”—“Let not your spirits sink,
“You're always safe, while you believe and drink.”

How strange to add, in this nefarious trade,
That men of parts are dupes by dunces made:

That creatures, nature meant should clean our streets,
Have purchased lands and mansions, parks and seats;
Wretches with conscience so obtuse, they leave
Their untaught sons their parents to deceive;
And when they're laid upon their dying-bed,
No thought of murder comes into their head;
Nor one revengeful ghost to them appears,
To fill the soul with penitential fears.

Yet not the whole of this imposing train
Their gardens, seats, and carriages obtain;
Chiefly, indeed, they to the robbers fall,
Who are most fitted to disgrace them all:
But there is hazard—patents must be bought,
Venders and puffers for the poison sought;
And then in many a paper through the year,
Must cures and cases, oaths and proofs appear;
Men snatch'd from graves, as they were dropping in,
Their lungs cough'd up, their bones pierced through
their skin;

Their liver all one scirrus, and the frame
Poison'd with evils which they dare not name;
Men who spent all upon physicians' fees,
Who never slept, nor had a moment's ease,
Are now as roaches sound, and all as brisk as bees.

If the sick gudgeons to the bait attend,
And come in shoals, the angler gains his end;

But should the advertising cash be spent,
Ere yet the town has due attention lent,
Then bursts the bubble, and the hungry cheat
Pines for the bread he ill deserves to eat;
It is a lottery, and he shares perhaps
The rich man's feast, or begs the pauper's scraps.

From powerful causes spring th' empiric's gains,
Man's love of life, his weakness, and his pains;
These first induce him the vile trash to try,
Then lend his name, that other men may buy:
This love of life, which in our nature rules,
To vile imposture makes us dupes and tools;
Then pain compels th' impatient soul to seize
On promised hopes of instantaneous ease;
And weakness too with every wish complies,
Worn out and won by importunities.

Troubled with something in your bile or blood,
You think your doctor does you little good;
And, grown impatient, you require in haste
The nervous cordial, nor dislike the taste;
It comforts, heals, and strengthens; nay, you think
It makes you better every time you drink;
“Then lend your name”—you're loth, but yet confess
Its powers are great, and so you acquiesce:
Yet think a moment, ere your name you lend,
With whose 'tis placed, and what you recommend;

Who tipples brandy will some comfort feel,
But will he to the med'cine set his seal?
Wait, and you'll find the cordial you admire
Has added fuel to your fever's fire:
Say, should a robber chance your purse to spare,
Would you the honour of the man declare?
Would you assist his purpose? swell his crime?
Besides, he might not spare a second time.

Compassion sometimes sets the fatal sign,
The man was poor, and humbly begg'd a line;
Else how should noble names and titles back
The spreading praise of some advent'rous quack?
But he the moment watches, and intreats
Your honour's name,—your honour joins the cheats;
You judged the med'cine harmless, and you lent
What help you could, and with the best intent;
But can it please you, thus to league with all
Whom he can beg or bribe to swell the scrawl?
Would you these wrappers with your name adorn,
Which hold the poison for the yet unborn?

No class escapes them—from the poor man's pay,
The nostrum takes no trifling part away;
See! those square patent bottles from the shop,
Now decoration to the cupboard's top;
And there a favourite hoard you'll find within,
Companions meet! the julep and the gin.

Time too with cash is wasted; 'tis the fate
Of real helpers to be call'd too late;
This find the sick, when (time and patience gone)
Death with a tenfold terror hurries on.

Suppose the case surpasses human skill,
There comes a quack to flatter weakness still;
What greater evil can a flatterer do,
Than from himself to take the sufferer's view?
To turn from sacred thoughts his reasoning powers,
And rob a sinner of his dying hours?
Yet this they dare, and, craving to the last,
In hope's strong bondage hold their victim fast:
For soul or body no concern have they,
All their inquiry, "Can the patient pay?"
"And will he swallow draughts until his dying day?"

Observe what ills to nervous females flow,
When the heart flutters, and the pulse is low;
If once induced these cordial sips to try,
All feel the ease, and few the danger fly;
For while obtain'd, of drams they've all the force,
And when denied, then drams are the resource.

Nor these the only evils—there are those
Who for the troubled mind prepare repose;
They write: the young are tenderly address'd,
Much danger hinted, much concern express'd;
They dwell on freedoms lads are prone to take,
Which makes the doctor tremble for their sake;

Still if the youthful patient will but trust
In one so kind, so pitiful, and just;
If he will take the tonic all the time,
And hold but moderate intercourse with crime;
The sage will gravely give his honest word,
That strength and spirits shall be both restored;
In plainer English—if you mean to sin,
Fly to the drops, and instantly begin.

Who would not lend a sympathizing sigh,
To hear yon infant's pity-moving cry?
That feeble sob, unlike the new-born note,
Which came with vigour from the op'ning throat;
When air and light first rush'd on lungs and eyes,
And there was life and spirit in the cries;
Now an abortive, faint attempt to weep,
Is all we hear; sensation is asleep:
The boy was healthy, and at first express'd
His feelings loudly, when he fail'd to rest;
When cramm'd with food, and tighten'd every limb,
To cry aloud, was what pertain'd to him;
Then the good nurse, (who, had she borne a brain,
Had sought the cause that made her babe complain,)
Has all her efforts, loving soul! applied,
To set the cry, and not the cause, aside;
She gave her powerful sweet without remorse,
The sleeping cordial—she had tried its force,

Repeating oft: the infant freed from pain,
Rejected food, but took the dose again,
Sinking to sleep; while she her joy express'd,
That her dear charge could sweetly take his rest:
Soon may she spare her cordial; not a doubt
Remains, but quickly he will rest without.

This moves our grief and pity, and we sigh
To think what numbers from these causes die;
But what contempt and anger should we show,
Did we the lives of these impostors know!

Ere for the world's I left the cares of school,
One I remember who assumed the fool:
A part well suited—when the idler boys
Would shout around him, and he loved the noise;
They call'd him Neddy;—Neddy had the art
To play with skill his ignominious part;
When he his trifles would for sale display,
And act the mimic for a schoolboy's pay.
For many years he plied his humble trade,
And used his tricks and talents to persuade;
The fellow barely read, but chanced to look
Among the fragments of a tatter'd book;
Where after many efforts made to spell
One puzzling word, he found it *oxymel*;
A potent thing, 'twas said, to cure the ills
Of ailing lungs—the *oxymel of squills*:

Squills he procured, but found the bitter strong,
And most unpleasant; none would take it long;
But the pure acid and the sweet would make
A med'cine numbers would for pleasure take.

There was a fellow near, an artful knave,
Who knew the plan, and much assistance gave;
He wrote the puffs, and every talent plied
To make it sell: it sold, and then he died.

Now all the profit fell to Ned's control,
And Pride and Avarice quarrell'd for his soul;
When mighty profits by the trash were made,
Pride built a palace, Avarice groan'd and paid;
Pride placed the signs of grandeur all about,
And Avarice barr'd his friends and children out.

Now see him doctor! yes, the idle fool,
The butt, the robber of the lads at school;
Who then knew nothing, nothing since acquired,
Became a doctor, honour'd and admired;
His dress, his frown, his dignity were such,
Some who had known him thought his knowledge
much;

Nay, men of skill, of apprehension quick,
Spite of their knowledge, trusted him when sick:
Though he could neither reason, write, nor spell,
They yet had hope his trash would make them well;
And while they scorn'd his parts, they took his oxymel.

Oh! when his nerves had once received a shock,
Sir Isaac Newton might have gone to Rock : *
Hence impositions of the grossest kind,
Hence thought is feeble, understanding blind ;
Hence sums enormous by those cheats are made,
And deaths unnumber'd by their dreadful trade.

Alas ! in vain is my contempt express'd,
To stronger passions are their words address'd ;
To pain, to fear, to terror their appeal,
To those who, weakly reasoning, strongly feel.

What then our hopes ?—perhaps there may by law
Be method found, these pests to curb and awe ;
Yet in this land of freedom, law is slack
With any being to commence attack ;
Then let us trust to science—there are those
Who can their falsehoods and their frauds disclose,
All their vile trash detect, and their low tricks expose :
Perhaps their numbers may in time confound
Their arts—as scorpions give themselves the wound :
For when these curers dwell in every place,
While of the cured we not a man can trace,
Strong truth may then the public mind persuade,
And spoil the fruits of this nefarious trade.

* An empiric who *flourished* at the same time with this great man.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER VIII.

TRADES.

Non possidentem multa vocaveris
Recte beatum: rectius occupat
Nomen Beati, qui Deorum
Muneribus sapienter uti,
Duramque callet pauperiem pati.

Hor. lib. iv. Ode 9.

Non uxor salvum te vult, non filius: omnes
Vicini oderunt; noti, pueri atque puellæ.
Miraris, cum tu argento post omnia ponas,
Si nemo præstet, quem non merearis, amorem?

Hor. Sat. lib. 1.

Non propter vitam faciunt patrimonia quidam,
Sed vitio cæci propter patrimonia vivunt.

Juvenal. Sat. 12.

No extensive Manufactories in the Borough: yet considerable Fortunes made there—Ill Judgment of Parents in disposing of their Sons—The best educated not the most likely to succeed—Instance—Want of Success compensated by the lenient Power of some Avocations—The Naturalist—The Weaver an Entomologist, &c.—A Prize-Flower—Story of Walter and William.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER VIII.

TRADES.

OF manufactures, trade, inventions rare,
Steam-towers and looms, you'd know our Borough's
share—

'Tis small: we boast not these rich subjects here,
Who hazard thrice ten thousand pounds a year;
We've no huge buildings, where incessant noise
Is made by springs and spindles, girls and boys;
Where, 'mid such thundering sounds, the maiden's song
Is "Harmony in Uproar" ⁽¹⁾ all day long.

Still common minds with us in common trade,
Have gain'd more wealth than ever student made;
And yet a merchant, when he gives his son
His college-learning, thinks his duty done;
A way to wealth he leaves his boy to find,
Just when he's made for the discovery blind.

Jones and his wife perceived their elder boy
Took to his learning, and it gave them joy;
This they encouraged, and were bless'd to see
Their son a fellow with a high degree;
A living fell, he married, and his sire
Declared 'twas all a father could require;
Children then bless'd them, and when letters came,
The parents proudly told each grandchild's name.

Meantime the sons at home in trade were placed,
Money their object—just the father's taste;
Saving he lived and long, and when he died,
He gave them all his fortune to divide:

“Martin,” said he, “at vast expense was taught;
“He gain'd his wish, and has the ease he sought.”

Thus the good priest (the Christian-scholar!) finds
What estimate is made by vulgar minds;
He sees his brothers, who had every gift
Of thriving, now assisted in their thrift;
While he whom learning, habits, all prevent,
Is largely mulct for each impediment.

Yet let us own that trade has much of chance,
Not all the careful by their care advance;
With the same parts and prospects, one a seat
Builds for himself; one finds it in the Fleet.
Then to the wealthy you will see denied,
Comforts and joys that with the poor abide:

There are who labour through the year, and yet
No more have gain'd than—not to be in debt;
Who still maintain the same laborious course,
Yet pleasure hails them from some favourite source;
And health, amusements, children, wife or friend,
With life's dull views their consolations blend.

Nor these alone possess the lenient power
Of soothing life in the desponding hour;
Some favourite studies, some delightful care,
The mind, with trouble and distresses, share;
And by a coin, a flower, a verse, a boat,
The stagnant spirits have been set afloat;
They pleased at first, and then the habit grew,
Till the fond heart no higher pleasure knew;
Till, from all cares and other comforts freed,
Th' important nothing took in life the lead.

With all his phlegm, it broke a Dutchman's heart,
At a vast price, with one loved root to part;
And toys like these fill many a British mind,
Although their hearts are found of firmer kind.

Oft have I smiled the happy pride to see
Of humble tradesmen, in their evening glee;
When of some pleasing, fancied good possess'd,
Each grew alert, was busy, and was bless'd;
Whether the call-bird yield the hour's delight,
Or, magnified in microscope, the mite;

Or whether tumblers, croppers, carriers seize
The gentle mind, they rule it and they please.

There is my friend the Weaver; strong desires
Reign in his breast; 'tis beauty he admires:
See! to the shady grove he wings his way,
And feels in hope the raptures of the day—
Eager he looks; and soon, to glad his eyes,
From the sweet bower, by nature form'd, arise
Bright troops of virgin moths and fresh-born butter-
flies;

Who broke that morning from their half-year's sleep,
To fly o'er flow'rs where they were wont to creep.

Above the sovereign oak, a sovereign skims,
The purple Emp'ror, strong in wing and limbs:
There fair Camilla takes her flight serene,
Adonis blue, and Paphia silver-queen;
With every filmy fly from mead or bower,
And hungry Sphinx who threads the honey'd flower;
She o'er the Larkspur's bed, where sweets abound,
Views ev'ry bell, and hums th' approving sound;
Poised on her busy plumes, with feeling nice
She draws from every flower, nor tries a floret twice.

He fears no bailiff's wrath, no baron's blame,
His is untax'd and undisputed game;
Nor less the place of curious plant he knows; ⁽²⁾
He both his Flora and his Fauna shows;

For him is blooming in its rich array
The glorious flower which bore the palm away;
In vain a rival tried his utmost art,
His was the prize, and joy o'erflow'd his heart.

“ This, this! is beauty; cast, I pray, your eyes
“ On this my glory! see the grace! the size!
“ Was ever stem so tall, so stout, so strong,
“ Exact in breadth, in just proportion, long!
“ These brilliant hues are all distinct and clean,
“ No kindred tint, no blending streaks between;
“ This is no shaded, run-off⁽³⁾, pin-eyed⁽⁴⁾ thing,
“ A king of flowers, a flower for England's king:
“ I own my pride, and thank the favouring star,
“ Which shed such beauty on my fair Bizarre⁽⁵⁾. ”

Thus may the poor the cheap indulgence seize,
While the most wealthy pine and pray for ease;
Content not always waits upon success,
And more may he enjoy who profits less.

Walter and William took (their father dead)
Jointly the trade to which they both were bred;
When fix'd, they married, and they quickly found
With due success their honest labours crown'd:
Few were their losses, but although a few,
Walter was vex'd, and somewhat peevish grew:
“ You put your trust in every pleading fool,”
Said he to William, and grew strange and cool.

“ Brother, forbear,” he answer’d; “ take your due,
“ Nor let my lack of caution injure you :”
Half friends they parted,—better so to close,
Than longer wait to part entirely foes.

Walter had knowledge, prudence, jealous care;
He let no idle views his bosom share;
He never thought nor felt for other men—
“ Let one mind one, and all are minded then.”
Friends he respected, and believed them just,
But they were men, and he would no man trust;
He tried and watch’d his people day and night,—
The good it harm’d not; for the bad ’twas right:
He could their humours bear, nay disrespect,
But he could yield no pardon to neglect;
That all about him were of him afraid,
“ Was right,” he said—“ so should we be obey’d.”

These merchant-maxims, much good-fortune too,
And ever keeping one grand point in view,
To vast amount his once small portion drew.

William was kind and easy; he complied
With all requests, or grieved when he denied;
To please his wife he made a costly trip,
To please his child he let a bargain slip;
Prone to compassion, mild with the distress’d,
He bore with all who poverty profess’d,
And some would he assist, nor one would he arrest.

He had some loss at sea, bad debts at land,
His clerk absconded with some bills in hand,
And plans so often fail'd that he no longer plann'd.
To a small house (his brother's) he withdrew,
At easy rent—the man was not a Jew;
And there his losses and his cares he bore,
Nor found that want of wealth could make him poor.

No, he in fact was rich; nor could he move,
But he was follow'd by the looks of love;
All he had suffer'd, every former grief,
Made those around more studious in relief;
He saw a cheerful smile in every face,
And lost all thoughts of error and disgrace.

Pleasant it was to see them in their walk
Round their small garden, and to hear them talk;
Free are their children, but their love refrains
From all offence—none murmurs, none complains;
Whether a book amused them, speech or play,
Their looks were lively, and their hearts were gay;
There no forced efforts for delight were made,
Joy came with prudence, and without parade;
Their common comforts they had all in view,
Light were their troubles, and their wishes few:
Thrift made them easy for the coming day,
Religion took the dread of death away;

A cheerful spirit still insured content,
And love smiled round them wheresoe'er they went.

Walter, meantime, with all his wealth's increase,
Gain'd many points, but could not purchase peace;
When he withdrew from business for an hour,
Some fled his presence, all confess'd his power;
He sought affection, but received instead
Fear undisguised, and love-repelling dread;
He look'd around him—"Harriet, dost thou love?"
"I do my duty," said the timid dove;
"Good Heav'n, your duty! prithee, tell me now—
"To love and honour—was not that your vow?
"Come, my good Harriet, I would gladly seek
"Your inmost thought—Why can't the woman speak?
"Have you not all things?"—"sir, do I complain?"—
"No, that's my part, which I perform in vain;
"I want a simple answer, and direct—
"But you evade; yes! 'tis as I suspect.
"Come then, my children! Watt! upon your knees
"Vow that you love me."—"Yes, sir, if you please."—
"Again! By Heav'n, it mads me; I require
"Love, and they'll do whatever I desire:
"Thus too my people shun me; I would spend
"A thousand pounds to get a single friend;
"I would be happy—I have means to pay
"For love and friendship, and you run away;

“ Ungrateful creatures! why, you seem to dread
“ My very looks; I know you wish me dead.
“ Come hither, Nancy! you must hold me dear;
“ Hither, I say; why! what have you to fear?
“ You see I’m gentle—Come, you trifler, come;
“ My God! she trembles! Idiot, leave the room!
“ Madam! your children hate me; I suppose
“ They know their cue: you make them all my foes;
“ I’ve not a friend in all the world—not one:
“ I’d be a bankrupt sooner; nay, ’tis done;
“ In every better hope of life I fail,
“ You’re all tormentors, and my house a jail;
“ Out of my sight! I’ll sit and make my will—
“ What, glad to go? stay, devils, and be still;
“ ’Tis to your Uncle’s cot you wish to run,
“ To learn to live at ease and be undone;
“ Him you can love, who lost his whole estate,
“ And I, who gain you fortunes, have your hate;
“ ’Tis in my absence, you yourselves enjoy:
“ Tom! are you glad to lose me? tell me, boy:
“ Yes! does he answer?”—“ Yes! upon my soul;”
“ No awe, no fear, no duty, no control!
“ Away! away! ten thousand devils seize
“ All I possess, and plunder where they please!
“ What’s wealth to me?—yes, yes! it gives me sway,
“ And you shall feel it—Go! begone, I say.”

- "Ungrateful creature! why, you shall be dead!"
- "My very looks, I know, you wish me dead!"
- "Come hither, I say! you must hold me dear!"
- "Hither, I say! what have you to fear?"
- "You are I am certain—come, you must, come!"
- "My God! see this! I say, I say, I say!"
- "Alas! your children hate me; I suppose"
- "They know their own; you make them all my loss!"
- "I am not a friend to all the world—but one!"
- "I'd be a bankrupt sooner; nay, tis done!"
- "In every better hope of this I fall!"
- "You're all conspirators, and my house a jail!"
- "Out of my sight! I'll kill and make my will!"
- "I'm glad to go; away, devils, and be still!"
- "Tis to your Uncle's cot you wish to fall!"
- "To leave to live at ease and be content!"
- "Him you can lose, who lost his whole estate!"
- "And I, who gain you fortunes, have your hate!"
- "Tis to my shame, you yourselves enjoy!"
- "Tome! are you glad to lose me? tell me, boy!"
- "Yes! does he answer?"—"Yes! upon my soul!"
- "No eye, no ear, no gift, no control!"
- "Away! away! far from devils and sin!"
- "All I possess, and plunder what they please!"
- "What's wealth to me?—yes, yes! it gives me ease!"
- "And you shall feel it—God! begone, I say!"

NOTES TO LETTER VIII.

Note 1, page 125, line 8.

Is "Harmony in Uproar" all day long.

The title of a short piece of humour by Arbuthnot.

Note 2, page 128, line 24.

Nor less the place of curious plant he knows.

In botanical language "*the habitat*," the favourite soil or situation of the more scarce species.

Note 3, page 129, line 11.

This is no shaded, run-off, pin-eyed thing.

This, it must be acknowledged, is contrary to the opinion of Thomson, and I believe of some other poets, who, in describing the varying hues of our most beautiful flowers, have considered them as lost and blended with each other; whereas their beauty, in the eye of a florist (and I conceive in that of the uninitiated also), depends upon the distinctness of their colours: the stronger the bounding line, and the less they break into the neighbouring tint, so much the richer and more valuable is the flower esteemed.

Note 4, page 129, line 11.

Pin-eyed.

An *auricula*, or any other single flower, is so called when the *stigma* (the part which arises from the seed-vessel) is protruded beyond the tube of the flower, and becomes visible.

Note 5, page 129, line 14.

Which shed such beauty on my fair Bizarre.

This word, so far as it relates to flowers, means those variegated with three or more colours irregularly and indeterminately.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER IX.

AMUSEMENTS.

Interpone tuis interdum gaudia curis,
Ut possis animo quemvis sufferre laborem.

Catull. lib. 3.

. Nostra fatiscat
Laxaturque chelys, vires instigat alitque
Tempestiva quies, major post otia virtus.

Statius Sylv. lib. 4.

Jamque mare et tellus nullum discrimen habebant;
Omnia pontus erant: deerant quoque littora ponto.

Ovid Metamorph. lib. 1.

Common Amusements of a Bathing-place—Morning Rides,
Walks, &c.—Company resorting to the Town—Different
Choice of Lodgings—Cheap Indulgences—Sea-side Walks—
Wealthy Invalid—Summer-Evening on the Sands—Sea Pro-
ductions—"Water parted from the Sea"—Winter Views
serene—In what Cases to be avoided—Sailing upon the River
—A small Islet of Sand off the Coast—Visited by Company
—Covered by the Flowing of the Tide—Adventure in that
Place.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER IX.

AMUSEMENTS.

OF our amusements ask you?—We amuse
Ourselves and friends with sea-side walks and views,
Or take a morning ride, a novel, or the news;
Or, seeking nothing, glide about the street,
And so engaged, with various parties meet;
Awhile we stop, discourse of wind and tide,
Bathing and books, the raffle, and the ride:
Thus, with the aid which shops and sailing give,
Life passes on; 'tis labour, but we live.

When evening comes, our invalids awake,
Nerves cease to tremble, heads forbear to ache;
Then cheerful meals the sunken spirits raise,
Cards or the dance, wine, visiting, or plays.

Soon as the season comes, and crowds arrive,
To their superior rooms the wealthy drive;

Others look round for lodging snug and small,
Such is their taste—they've hatred to a hall;
Hence one his fav'rite habitation gets,
The brick-floor'd parlour which the butcher lets;
Where, through his single light, he may regard
The various business of a common yard,
Bounded by backs of buildings form'd of clay,
By stable, sties, and coops, et-cætera.

The needy-vain, themselves awhile to shun,
For dissipation to these dog-holes run;
Where each (assuming petty pomp) appears,
And quite forgets the shopboard and the sheers.

For them are cheap amusements: they may slip
Beyond the town and take a private dip;
When they may urge that, to be safe they mean,
They've heard there's danger in a light machine;
They too can gratis move the quays about,
And gather kind replies to every doubt;
There they a pacing, lounging tribe may view,
The stranger's guides, who've little else to do;
The Borough's placemen, where no more they gain
Than keeps them idle, civil, poor, and vain.
Then may the poorest with the wealthy look
On ocean, glorious page of Nature's book!
May see its varying views in every hour,
All softness now, then rising with all power,
As sleeping to invite, or threat'ning to devour:

'Tis this which gives us all our choicest views;
Its waters heal us, and its shores amuse.

See! those fair nymphs upon that rising strand,
Yon long salt lake has parted from the land;
Well pleased to press that path, so clean, so pure,
To seem in danger, yet to feel secure;
Trifling with terror, while they strive to shun
The curling billows; laughing as they run;
They know the neck that joins the shore and sea,
Or, ah! how changed that fearless laugh would be.

Observe how various parties take their way,
By sea-side walks, or make the sand-hills gay;
There group'd are laughing maids and sighing swains,
And some apart who feel unpitied pains;
Pains from diseases, pains which those who feel,
To the physician, not the fair, reveal:
For nymphs (propitious to the lover's sigh)
Leave these poor patients to complain and die.

Lo! where on that huge anchor sadly leans
That sick tall figure, lost in other scenes;
He late from India's clime impatient sail'd,
There, as his fortune grew, his spirits fail'd;
For each delight, in search of wealth he went,
For ease alone, the wealth acquired is spent—
And spent in vain; enrich'd, aggrieved, he sees
The envied poor possess'd of joy and ease:

And now he flies from place to place, to gain
Strength for enjoyment, and still flies in vain:
Mark! with what sadness, of that pleasant crew,
Boist'rous in mirth, he takes a transient view;
And fixing then his eye upon the sea,
Thinks what has been and what must shortly be:
Is it not strange that man should health destroy,
For joys that come when he is dead to joy?

Now is it pleasant in the summer-eve,
When a broad shore retiring waters leave,
Awhile to wait upon the firm fair sand,
When all is calm at sea, all still at land;
And there the ocean's produce to explore,
As floating by, or rolling on the shore;
Those living jellies ⁽¹⁾ which the flesh inflame,
Fierce as a nettle, and from that its name;
Some in huge masses, some that you may bring
In the small compass of a lady's ring;
Figured by hand divine—there's not a gem
Wrought by man's art to be compared to them;
Soft, brilliant, tender, through the wave they glow,
And make the moonbeam brighter where they flow.
Involved in sea-wrack, here you find a race,
Which science doubting, knows not where to place;
On shell or stone is dropp'd the embryo-seed,
And quickly vegetates a vital breed ⁽²⁾.

While thus with pleasing wonder you inspect
Treasures the vulgar in their scorn reject,
See as they float along th' entangled weeds
Slowly approach, upborne on bladdery beads;
Wait till they land, and you shall then behold
The fiery sparks those tangled frons' infold,
Myriads of living points ⁽³⁾; th' unaided eye
Can but the fire and not the form descry.
And now your view upon the ocean turn,
And there the splendour of the waves discern;
Cast but a stone, or strike them with an oar,
And you shall flames within the deep explore;
Or scoop the stream phosphoric as you stand,
And the cold flames shall flash along your hand;
When, lost in wonder, you shall walk and gaze
On weeds that sparkle, and on waves that blaze ⁽⁴⁾.

The ocean too has winter-views serene,
When all you see through densest fog is seen;
When you can hear the fishers near at hand
Distinctly speak, yet see not where they stand;
Or sometimes them and not their boat discern,
Or half-conceal'd some figure at the stern;
The view's all bounded, and from side to side
Your utmost prospect but a few ells wide;
Boys who, on shore, to sea the pebble cast,
Will hear it strike against the viewless mast;

While the stern boatman growls his fierce disdain,
At whom he knows not, whom he threats in vain.

'Tis pleasant then to view the nets float past,
Net after net till you have seen the last;
And as you wait till all beyond you slip,
A boat comes gliding from an anchor'd ship,
Breaking the silence with the dipping oar,
And their own tones, as labouring for the shore;
Those measured tones which with the scene agree,
And give a sadness to serenity.

All scenes like these the tender maid should shun,
Nor to a misty beach in autumn run;
Much should she guard against the evening cold,
And her slight shape with fleecy warmth infold;
This she admits, but not with so much ease
Gives up the night-walk when th' attendants please:
Her have I seen, pale, vapour'd through the day,
With crowded parties at the midnight play;
Faint in the morn, no powers could she exert;
At night with Pam delighted and alert;
In a small shop she's ruffled with a crowd,
Breathed the thick air, and cough'd and laugh'd aloud;
She who will tremble if her eye explore
"The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor;"
Whom the kind doctor charged with shaking head,
At early hour to quit the beaux for bed:

She has, contemning fear, gone down the dance,
Till she perceived the rosy morn advance;
Then has she wonder'd, fainting o'er her tea,
Her drops and julep should so useless be:
Ah! sure her joys must ravish every sense,
Who buys a portion at such vast expense.

Among those joys, 'tis one at eve to sail
On the broad river with a favourite gale;
When no rough waves upon the bosom ride,
But the keel cuts, nor rises on the tide;
Safe from the stream the nearer gunwale stands,
Where playful children trail their idle hands:
Or strive to catch long grassy leaves that float
On either side of the impeded boat;
What time the moon arising shows the mud,
A shining border to the silver flood:
When, by her dubious light, the meanest views,
Chalk, stones, and stakes, obtain the richest hues;
And when the cattle, as they gazing stand,
Seem nobler objects than when view'd from land:
Then anchor'd vessels in the way appear,
And sea-boys greet them as they pass—"What cheer?"
The sleeping shell-ducks at the sound arise,
And utter loud their unharmonious cries;
Fluttering they move their weedy beds among,
Or instant diving, hide their plumeless young.

Along the wall, returning from the town,
The weary rustic homeward wanders down;
Who stops and gazes at such joyous crew,
And feels his envy rising at the view;
He the light speech and laugh indignant hears,
And feels more press'd by want, more vex'd by fears.

Ah! go in peace, good fellow, to thine home,
Nor fancy these escape the general doom;
Gay as they seem, be sure with them are hearts
With sorrow tried; there's sadness in their parts:
If thou couldst see them when they think alone,
Mirth, music, friends, and these amusements gone;
Couldst thou discover every secret ill
That pains their spirit, or resists their will;
Couldst thou behold forsaken Love's distress,
Or Envy's pang at glory and success,
Or Beauty, conscious of the spoils of Time,
Or Guilt alarm'd when Memory shows the crime;
All that gives sorrow, terror, grief, and gloom;
Content would cheer thee trudging to thine home ⁽⁵⁾.

There are, 'tis true, who lay their cares aside,
And bid some hours in calm enjoyment glide;
Perchance some fair-one to the sober night
Adds (by the sweetness of her song) delight;
And, as the music on the water floats,
Some bolder shore returns the soften'd notes;

Then, youth, beware, for all around conspire
To banish caution and to wake desire;
The day's amusement, feasting, beauty, wine,
These accents sweet and this soft hour combine,
When most unguarded, then to win that heart of thine:
But see, they land! the fond enchantment flies,
And in its place life's common views arise.

Sometimes a party, row'd from town, will land
On a small islet form'd of shelly sand,
Left by the water when the tides are low,
But which the floods in their return o'erflow:
There will they anchor, pleased awhile to view
The watery waste, a prospect wild and new;
The now receding billows give them space,
On either side the growing shores to pace;
And then returning, they contract the scene,
Till small and smaller grows the walk between;
As sea to sea approaches, shore to shores,
Till the next ebb the sandy isle restores.

Then what alarm! what danger and dismay,
If all their trust, their boat should drift away;
And once it happen'd—gay the friends advanced,
They walk'd, they ran, they play'd, they sang, they
danced;

The urns were boiling, and the cups went round,
And not a grave or thoughtful face was found;

On the bright sand they trod with nimble feet,
Dry shelly sand that made the summer-seat;
The wondering mews flew fluttering o'er the head,
And waves ran softly up their shining bed.

Some form'd a party from the rest to stray,
Pleased to collect the trifles in their way;
These to behold they call their friends around,
No friends can hear, or hear another sound;
Alarm'd, they hasten, yet perceive not why,
But catch the fear that quickens as they fly.

For lo! a lady sage, who paced the sand
With her fair children, one in either hand,
Intent on home, had turn'd, and saw the boat
Slipp'd from her moorings, and now far afloat;
She gazed, she trembled, and though faint her call,
It seem'd, like thunder, to confound them all.
Their sailor-guides, the boatman and his mate,
Had drank, and slept regardless of their state;
“Awake,” they cried aloud! “Alarm the shore!
“Shout all, or never shall we reach it more!”
Alas! no shout the distant land can reach,
Nor eye behold them from the foggy beach:
Again they join in one loud powerful cry,
Then cease, and eager listen for reply;
None came—the rising wind blew sadly by:
They shout once more, and then they turn aside,
To see how quickly flow'd the coming tide;

Between each cry they find the waters steal
On their strange prison, and new horrors feel;
Foot after foot on the contracted ground
The billows fall, and dreadful is the sound;
Less and yet less the sinking isle became,
And there was wailing, weeping, wrath, and blame.

Had one been there, with spirit strong and high,
Who could observe, as he prepared to die,
He might have seen of hearts the varying kind,
And traced the movement of each different mind:
He might have seen, that not the gentle maid
Was more than stern and haughty man afraid;
Such, calmly grieving, will their fears suppress,
And silent prayers to Mercy's throne address;
While fiercer minds, impatient, angry, loud,
Force their vain grief on the reluctant crowd:
The party's patron, sorely sighing, cried,
"Why would you urge me? I at first denied."
Fiercely they answer'd, "Why will you complain,
"Who saw no danger, or was warn'd in vain?"
A few essay'd the troubled soul to calm,
But dread prevail'd, and anguish and alarm.

Now rose the water through the lessening sand,
And they seem'd sinking while they yet could stand;
The sun went down, they look'd from side to side,
Nor aught except the gathering sea descried;

Dark and more dark, more wet, more cold it grew,
And the most lively bade to hope adieu;
Children, by love then lifted from the seas,
Felt not the waters at the parents' knees,
But wept aloud; the wind increased the sound,
And the cold billows as they broke around.

“ Once more, yet once again, with all our strength,
“ Cry to the land—we may be heard at length.”
Vain hope if yet unseen! but hark! an oar,
That sound of bliss! comes dashing to their shore;
Still, still the water rises, “ Haste!” they cry,
“ Oh! hurry, seamen; in delay we die:”

(Seamen were these, who in their ship perceived
The drifted boat, and thus her crew relieved.)

And now the keel just cuts the cover'd sand,
Now to the gunwale stretches every hand:
With trembling pleasure all confused embark,
And kiss the tackling of their welcome ark;
While the most giddy, as they reach the shore,
Think of their danger, and their God adore.

NOTES TO LETTER IX.

Note 1, page 142, line 15.

Those living jellies which the flesh inflame.

Some of the smaller species of the Medusa (sea-nettle) are exquisitely beautiful: their form is nearly oval, varied with serrated longitudinal lines; they are extremely tender, and by no means which I am acquainted with can be preserved, for they soon dissolve in either spirit of wine or water, and lose every vestige of their shape, and indeed of their substance: the larger species are found in mis-shapen masses of many pounds weight; these, when handled, have the effect of the nettle, and the stinging is often accompanied or succeeded by the more unpleasant feeling, perhaps in a slight degree resembling that caused by the torpedo.

Note 2, page 142, line last.

And quickly vegetates a vital breed.

Various tribes and species of marine vermes are here meant: that which so nearly resembles a vegetable in its form, and perhaps, in some degree, manner of growth, is the coralline called by naturalists Sertularia, of which there are many species in almost every part of the coast. The animal protrudes its many claws (apparently in search of prey) from certain pellucid vesicles which proceed from a horny, tenacious, branchy stem.

Note 3, page 143, line 7.

*Myriads of living points: th' unaided eye
Can but the fire and not the form descry.*

These are said to be a minute kind of animal of the same class; when it does not shine, it is invisible to the naked eye.

Note 4, page 143, line 16.

On weeds that sparkle, and on waves that blaze.

For the cause or causes of this phenomenon, which is sometimes, though rarely, observed on our coasts, I must refer the reader to the writers on natural philosophy and natural history.

Note 5, page 146, line 20.

Content would cheer thee trudging to thine home.

This is not offered as a reasonable source of contentment, but as one motive for resignation: there would not be so much envy if there were more discernment.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER X.

CLUBS AND SOCIAL MEETINGS

Non inter lances mensasque nitentes,
Cum stupet insanis acies fulgoribus, et cum
Acclinis falsis animus meliora recusat;
Verum hîc impransi mecum disquirite.

Hor. Sat. 2. lib. 2.

O prodiga rerum
Luxuries, nunquam parvo contenta paratu,
Et quæditorum terrâ pelagoque ciborum
Ambitiosa fames et lautæ gloria mensæ.

Lucan. lib. 4.

Et quæ non prosunt singula, juncta juvant.

Rusticus agricolam, miles fera bella gerentem,
Rectorem dubiæ navita puppis amat.

Ovid. Pont. lib. 2.

Desire of Country Gentlemen for Town Associations—Book-clubs—Too much of literary Character expected from them—Literary Conversation prevented: by Feasting: by Cards—Good, notwithstanding, results—Card-club with Eagerness resorted to—Players—Umpires at the Whist Table—Petulances of Temper there discovered—Free-and-easy Club: not perfectly easy or free—Freedom, how interrupted—The superior Member—Termination of the Evening—Drinking and Smoking Clubs—The Midnight Conversation of the delaying Members—Society of the poorer Inhabitants: its Use: gives Pride and Consequence to the humble Character—Pleasant Habitations of the frugal Poor—Sailor returning to his Family—Freemasons' Club—The Mystery—What its Origin—Its professed Advantages—Griggs and Gregorians—A Kind of Masons—Reflections on these various Societies.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER X.

CLUBS AND SOCIAL MEETINGS.

You say you envy in your calm retreat
Our social meetings;—'tis with joy we meet:
In these our parties you are pleased to find
Good sense and wit, with intercourse of mind;
Composed of men, who read, reflect, and write,
Who, when they meet, must yield and share delight:
To you our Book-club has peculiar charm,
For which you sicken in your quiet farm;
Here you suppose us at our leisure placed,
Enjoying freedom, and displaying taste;
With wisdom cheerful, temperately gay,
Pleased to enjoy, and willing to display.

If thus your envy gives your ease its gloom,
Give wings to fancy, and among us come.
We're now assembled; you may soon attend—
I'll introduce you—"Gentlemen, my friend."

“ Now are you happy ? you have pass'd a night

“ In gay discourse, and rational delight.”

“ Alas ! not so : for how can mortals think,

“ Or thoughts exchange, if thus they eat and drink ?

“ No ! I confess, when we had fairly dined,

“ That was no time for intercourse of mind ;

“ There was each dish prepared with skill t'invite,

“ And to detain the struggling appetite ;

“ On such occasions minds with one consent

“ Are to the comforts of the body lent ;

“ There was no pause—the wine went quickly round,

“ Till struggling Fancy was by Bacchus bound ;

“ Wine is to wit as water thrown on fire,

“ By duly sprinkling both are raised the higher ;

“ Thus largely dealt, the vivid blaze they choke,

“ And all the genial flame goes off in smoke.”

“ But when no more your boards these loads contain,

“ When wine no more o'erwhelms the labouring brain,

“ But serves, a gentle stimulus ; we know

“ How wit must sparkle, and how fancy flow.”

It might be so, but no such club-days come ;

We always find these dampers in the room :

If to converse were all that brought us here,

A few odd members would in turn appear ;

Who dwelling nigh, would saunter in and out,

O'erlook the list, and toss the books about ;

Or yawning read them, walking up and down,
Just as the loungers in the shops in town;
Till fancying nothing would their minds amuse,
They'd push them by, and go in search of news.

But our attractions are a stronger sort,
The earliest dainties and the oldest port;
All enter then with glee in every look,
And not a member thinks about a book.

Still let me own, there are some vacant hours,
When minds might work, and men exert their powers :
Ere wine to folly spurs the giddy guest,
But gives to wit its vigour and its zest ;
Then might we reason, might in turn display
Our several talents, and be wisely gay ;
We might—but who a tame discourse regards,
When whist is named, and we behold the cards ?

We from that time are neither grave nor gay ;
Our thought, our care, our business is to play :
Fix'd on these spots and figures, each attends
Much to his partners, nothing to his friends.

Our public cares, the long, the warm debate,
That kept our patriots from their beds so late ;
War, peace, invasion, all we hope or dread,
Vanish like dreams when men forsake their bed ;
And groaning nations and contending kings
Are all forgotten for these painted things :

Paper and paste, vile figures and poor spots,
Level all minds, philosophers and sots;
And give an equal spirit, pause, and force,
Join'd with peculiar diction, to discourse:
“Who deals?—you led—we’re three by cards—had you
“Honour in hand?”—“Upon my honour, two.”
Hour after hour, men thus contending sit,
Grave without sense, and pointed without wit.

Thus it appears these envied clubs possess
No certain means of social happiness;
Yet there’s a good that flows from scenes like these—
Man meets with man at leisure and at ease;
We to our neighbours and our equals come,
And rub off pride that man contracts at home;
For there, admitted master, he is prone
To claim attention and to talk alone:
But here he meets with neither son nor spouse;
No humble cousin to his bidding bows;
To his raised voice his neighbours’ voices rise,
To his high look as lofty look replies;
When much he speaks, he finds that ears are closed,
And certain signs inform him when he’s prosed;
Here all the value of a listener know,
And claim, in turn, the favour they bestow.

No pleasure gives the speech, when all would speak,
And all in vain a civil hearer seek.

To chance alone we owe the free discourse,
In vain you purpose what you cannot force;
'Tis when the favourite themes unbidden spring,
That fancy soars with such unwearied wing;
Then may you call in aid the moderate glass,
But let it slowly and unprompted pass;
So shall there all things for the end unite,
And give that hour of rational delight.

Men to their clubs repair, themselves to please,
To care for nothing, and to take their ease;
In fact, for play, for wine, for news they come:
Discourse is shared with friends or found at home.

But cards with books are incidental things;
We've nights devoted to these queens and kings:
Then if we choose the social game, we may;
Now 'tis a duty, and we're bound to play;
Nor ever meeting of the social kind
Was more engaging, yet had less of mind.

Our eager parties, when the lunar light
Throws its full radiance on the festive night,
Of either sex, with punctual hurry come,
And fill, with one accord, an ample room;
Pleased, the fresh packs on cloth of green they see,
And seizing, handle with preluding glee;

They draw, they sit, they shuffle, cut and deal;
Like friends assembled, but like foes to feel:
But yet not all,—a happier few have joys
Of mere amusement, and their cards are toys;
No skill nor art, nor fretful hopes have they,
But while their friends are gaming, laugh and play.

Others there are, the veterans of the game,
Who owe their pleasure to their envied fame;
Through many a year, with hard-contested strife,
Have they attain'd this glory of their life:
Such is that ancient burgess, whom in vain
Would gout and fever on his couch detain;
And that large lady, who resolves to come,
Though a first fit has warn'd her of her doom!
These are as oracles: in every cause
They settle doubts, and their decrees are laws;
But all are troubled, when, with dubious look,
Diana questions what Apollo spoke.

Here avarice first, the keen desire of gain,
Rules in each heart, and works in every brain;
Alike the veteran-dames and virgins feel,
Nor care what gray-beards or what striplings deal;
Sex, age, and station, vanish from their view,
And gold, their sov'reign good, the mingled crowd
pursue.

Hence they are jealous, and as rivals, keep
A watchful eye on the beloved heap;

Meantime discretion bids the tongue be still,
And mild good-humour strives with strong ill-will;
Till prudence fails; when, all impatient grown,
They make their grief, by their suspicions, known.

“ Sir, I protest, were Job himself at play,
“ He’d rave to see you throw your cards away;
“ Not that I care a button—not a pin
“ For what I lose; but we had cards to win:
“ A saint in heaven would grieve to see such hand
“ Cut up by one who will not understand.”

“ Complain of me! and so you might indeed,
“ If I had ventured on that foolish lead,
“ That fatal heart—but I forgot your play—
“ Some folk have ever thrown their hearts away.”
“ Yes, and their diamonds; I have heard of one
“ Who made a beggar of an only son.”

“ Better a beggar, than to see him tied
“ To art and spite, to insolence and pride.”

“ Sir, were I you, I’d strive to be polite,
“ Against my nature, for a single night.”

“ So did you strive, and, madam! with success;
“ I knew no being we could censure less!”

Is this too much? alas! my peaceful muse
Cannot with half their virulence abuse.

And hark! at other tables discord reigns,
With feign’d contempt for losses and for gains;

Passions awhile are bridled; then they rage,
In waspish youth, and in resentful age;
With scraps of insult—"Sir, when next you play,
"Reflect whose money 'tis you throw away.
"No one on earth can less such things regard,
"But when one's partner doesn't know a card——"
"I scorn suspicion, ma'am, but while you stand
"Behind that lady, pray keep down your hand."
"Good heav'n, revoke! remember, if the set
"Be lost, in honour you should pay the debt."
"There, there's your money; but, while I have life,
"I'll never more sit down with man and wife;
"They snap and snarl indeed, but in the heat
"Of all their spleen, their understandings meet;
"They are Freemasons, and have many a sign,
"That we, poor devils! never can divine:
"May it be told, do ye divide th' amount,
"Or goes it all to family account?"

Next is the club, where to their friends in town
Our country neighbours once a month come down;
We term it Free-and-easy, and yet we
Find it no easy matter to be free:
Ev'n in our small assembly, friends among,
Are minds perverse, there's something will be wrong;

Men are not equal; some will claim a right
To be the kings and heroes of the night;
Will their own favourite themes and notions start,
And you must hear, offend them, or depart.

There comes Sir Thomas from his village-seat,
Happy, he tells us, all his friends to meet;
He brings the ruin'd brother of his wife,
Whom he supports, and makes him sick of life;
A ready witness whom he can produce
Of all his deeds—a butt for his abuse;
Soon as he enters, has the guests espied,
Drawn to the fire, and to the glass applied—
“ Well, what's the subject?—what are you about?
“ The news, I take it—come, I'll help you out;”—
And then, without one answer, he bestows
Freely upon us all he hears and knows;
Gives us opinions, tells us how he votes,
Recites the speeches, adds to them his notes,
And gives old ill-told tales for new-born anecdotes;
Yet cares he nothing what we judge or think,
Our only duty's to attend and drink:
At length, admonish'd by his gout, he ends
The various speech, and leaves at peace his friends;
But now, alas! we've lost the pleasant hour,
And wisdom flies from wine's superior power.

Wine, like the rising sun, possession gains,
And drives the mist of dulness from the brains;

The gloomy vapour from the spirit flies,
And views of gaiety and gladness rise:
Still it proceeds; till from the glowing heat,
The prudent calmly to their shades retreat;—
Then is the mind o'ercast—in wordy rage
And loud contention angry men engage;
Then spleen and pique, like fire-works thrown in spite,
To mischief turn the pleasures of the night;
Anger abuses, Malice loudly rails,
Revenge awakes, and Anarchy prevails:
Till wine, that raised the tempest, makes it cease,
And maudlin Love insists on instant peace;
He, noisy mirth and roaring song commands,
Gives idle toasts, and joins unfriendly hands;
Till fuddled Friendship vows esteem and weeps,
And jovial Folly drinks and sings and sleeps.

A club there is of Smokers—Dare you come
To that close, clouded, hot, narcotic room?
When, midnight past, the very candles seem
Dying for air, and give a ghastly gleam;
When curling fumes in lazy wreaths arise,
And prosing toppers rub their winking eyes;
When the long tale, renew'd when last they met,
Is spliced anew, and is unfinish'd yet;

When but a few are left the house to tire,
And they half-sleeping by the sleepy fire;
Ev'n the poor ventilating vane, that flew
Of late so fast, is now grown drowsy too;
When sweet, cold, clammy punch its aid bestows,
Then thus the midnight conversation flows:—

“ Then, as I said, and—mind me—as I say,
“ At our last meeting—you remember”—“ Ay;”
“ Well, very well—then freely as I drink
“ I spoke my thought—you take me—what I think :
“ And sir, said I, if I a freeman be,
“ It is my bounden duty to be free.”

“ Ay, there you posed him : I respect the chair,
“ But man is man, although the man's a mayor :
“ If Muggins live—no, no!—if Muggins die,
“ He'll quit his office—neighbour, shall I try?”

“ I'll speak my mind, for here are none but friends :
“ They're all contending for their private ends ;
“ No public spirit—once a vote would bring,
“ I say a vote—was then a pretty thing;
“ It made a man to serve his country and his king :
“ But for that place, that Muggins must resign,
“ You've my advice—'tis no affair of mine.”

The poor man has his club; he comes and spends
His hoarded pittance with his chosen friends;

Nor this alone,—a monthly dole he pays,
To be assisted when his health decays;
Some part his prudence, from the day's supply,
For cares and troubles in his age, lays by;
The printed rules he guards with painted frame,
And shows his children where to read his name:
Those simple words his honest nature move,
That bond of union tied by laws of love;
This is his pride, it gives to his employ
New value, to his home another joy;
While a religious hope its balm applies
For all his fate inflicts and all his state denies.

Much would it please you, sometimes to explore
The peaceful dwellings of our borough poor;
To view a sailor just return'd from sea,
His wife beside; a child on either knee,
And others crowding near, that none may lose
The smallest portion of the welcome news;
What dangers pass'd, “when seas ran mountains high,
“When tempests raved, and horrors veil'd the sky;
“When prudence fail'd, when courage grew dismay'd,
“When the strong fainted, and the wicked pray'd,—
“Then in the yawning gulf far down we drove,
“And gazed upon the billowy mount above;
“Till up that mountain, swinging with the gale,
“We view'd the horrors of the watery vale.”

The trembling children look with stedfast eyes,
And panting, sob involuntary sighs :
Soft sleep awhile his torpid touch delays,
And all is joy and piety and praise.

Masons are ours, Freemasons—but, alas !
To their own bards I leave the mystic class ;
In vain shall one, and not a gifted man,
Attempt to sing of this enlighten'd clan :
I know no word, boast no directing sign,
And not one token of the race is mine ;
Whether with Hiram, that wise widow's son,
They came from Tyre to royal Solomon,
Two pillars raising by their skill profound,
Boaz and Jachin through the East renown'd :
Whether the sacred books their rise express,
Or books profane, 'tis vain for me to guess ;
It may be, lost in date remote and high,
They know not what their own antiquity :
It may be too, derived from cause so low,
They have no wish their origin to show :
If, as crusaders, they combined to wrest
From heathen lords the land they long possess'd ;
Or were at first some harmless club, who made
Their idle meetings solemn by parade ;

Is but conjecture—for the task unfit,
Awe-struck and mute, the puzzling theme I quit:
Yet, if such blessings from their order flow,
We should be glad their moral code to know;
Trowels of silver are but simple things,
And aprons worthless as their apron-strings;
But if indeed you have the skill to teach
A social spirit, now beyond our reach;
If man's warm passions you can guide and bind,
And plant the virtues in the wayward mind;
If you can wake to christian-love the heart,—
In mercy, something of your powers impart.

But as it seems, we Masons must become
To know the secret, and must then be dumb;
And as we venture for uncertain gains,
Perhaps the profit is not worth the pains.

When Bruce, that dauntless traveller, thought he
stood

On Nile's first rise! the fountain of the flood,
And drank exulting in the sacred spring,
The critics told him it was no such thing;
That springs unnumber'd round the country ran,
But none could show him where the first began:
So might we feel, should we our time bestow,
To gain these secrets and these signs to know;
Might question still if all the truth we found,
And firmly stood upon the certain ground;

We might our title to the mystery dread,
And fear we drank not at the river-head.

Griggs and Gregorians here their meetings hold,
Convivial sects, and Bucks alert and bold;
A kind of Masons, but without their sign;
The bonds of union—pleasure, song, and wine:
Man, a gregarious creature, loves to fly
Where he the trackings of the herd can spy;
Still to be one with many he desires,
Although it leads him through the thorns and briers.

A few! but few there are, who in the mind
Perpetual source of consolation find;
The weaker many to the world will come,
For comforts seldom to be found from home.

When the faint hands no more a brimmer hold,
When flannel-wreaths the useless limbs infold,
The breath impeded, and the bosom cold;
When half the pillow'd man the palsy chains,
And the blood falters in the bloated veins,—
Then, as our friends no further aid supply
Than hope's cold phrase and courtesy's soft sigh,
We should that comfort for ourselves ensure,
Which friends could not, if we could friends, procure.

Early in life, when we can laugh aloud,
There's something pleasant in a social crowd,

Who laugh with us—but will such joy remain,
When we lie struggling on the bed of pain?
When our physician tells us with a sigh,
No more on hope and science to rely,
Life's staff is useless then; with labouring breath
We pray for hope divine—the staff of death—
This is a scene which few companions grace,
And where the heart's first favourites yield their place.

Here all the aid of man to man must end,
Here mounts the soul to her eternal Friend;
The tenderest love must here its tie resign,
And give th'aspiring heart to love divine.

Men feel their weakness, and to numbers run,
Themselves to strengthen, or themselves to shun;
But though to this our weakness may be prone,
Let's learn to live, for we must die, alone.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XI.

INNS.

All the comforts of life in a tavern are known,
'Tis his home who possesses not one of his own;
And to him who has rather too much of that one,
'Tis the house of a friend where he's welcome to run:
The instant you enter my door you're my lord,
With whose taste and whose pleasure I'm proud to accord;
And the louder you call and the longer you stay,
The more I am happy to serve and obey.

To the house of a friend if you're pleased to retire,
You must all things admit, you must all things admire;
You must pay with observance the price of your treat,
You must eat what is praised, and must praise what you eat:
But here you may come, and no tax we require,
You may loudly condemn what you greatly admire;
You may growl at our wishes and pains to excel,
And may snarl at the rascals who please you so well.

At your wish we attend, and confess that your speech
On the nation's affairs might the minister teach;
His views you may blame, and his measures oppose,
There's no tavern-treason—you're under the Rose:
Should rebellions arise in your own little state,
With me you may safely their consequence wait;
To recruit your lost spirits 'tis prudent to come,
And to fly to a friend when the devil's at home.

That I've faults is confess'd; but it won't be denied,
'Tis my interest the faults of my neighbours to hide;
If I've sometimes lent Scandal occasion to prate,
I've often conceal'd what she'd love to relate;
If to Justice's bar some have wander'd from mine,
'Twas because the dull rogues wouldn't stay by their wine;
And for brawls at my house, well the poet explains,
That men drink *shallow draughts*, and so madden their brains.

A difficult Subject for Poetry—Invocation of the Muse—Description of the principal Inn and those of the first Class—The large deserted Tavern—Those of a second Order—Their Company—One of particular Description—A lower Kind of Public-Houses: yet distinguished among themselves—Houses on the Quays for Sailors—The Green-Man: its Landlord, and the Adventure of his Marriage, &c.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XI.

INNS.

MUCH do I need, and therefore will I ask,
A Muse to aid me in my present task ;
For then with special cause we beg for aid,
When of our subject we are most afraid :
Inns are this subject—'tis an ill-drawn lot,
So, thou who gravely triflest, fail me not.
Fail not, but haste, and to my memory bring
Scenes yet unsung, which few would choose to sing :
Thou mad'st a Shilling splendid ; thou hast thrown
On humble themes the graces all thine own ;
By thee the Mistress of a village-school
Became a queen, enthroned upon her stool ;
And far beyond the rest thou gav'st to shine
Belinda's Lock—that deathless work was thine.

Come, lend thy cheerful light, and give to please,
These seats of revelry, these scenes of ease ;

Who sings of Inns much danger has to dread,
And needs assistance from the fountain-head.

High in the street, o'erlooking all the place,
The rampant Lion shows his kingly face;
His ample jaws extend from side to side,
His eyes are glaring, and his nostrils wide;
In silver shag the sovereign form is dress'd,
A mane horrific sweeps his ample chest;
Elate with pride, he seems t'assert his reign,
And stands the glory of his wide domain.

Yet nothing dreadful to his friends the sight,
But sign and pledge of welcome and delight:
To him the noblest guest the town detains
Flies for repast, and in his court remains;
Him too the crowd with longing looks admire,
Sigh for his joys, and modestly retire;
Here not a comfort shall to them be lost
Who never ask or never feel the cost.

The ample yards on either side contain
Buildings where order and distinction reign;—
The splendid carriage of the wealthier guest,
The ready chaise and driver smartly dress'd;
Whiskeys and gigs and curricles are there,
And high-fed prancers many a raw-boned pair.
On all without a lordly host sustains
The care of empire, and observant reigns;

The parting guest beholds him at his side,
With pomp obsequious, bending in his pride;
Round all the place his eyes all objects meet,
Attentive, silent, civil, and discreet.
O'er all within the lady-hostess rules,
Her bar she governs, and her kitchen schools;
To every guest th' appropriate speech is made,
And every duty with distinction paid;
Respectful, easy, pleasant, or polite—

“ Your honour's servant—Mister Smith, good night.”

Next, but not near, yet honour'd through the town,
There swing, incongruous pair! the Bear and Crown;
That Crown suspended gems and ribands deck,
A golden chain hangs o'er that furry neck:
Unlike the nobler beast, the Bear is bound,
And with the Crown so near him, scowls uncrown'd;
Less his dominion, but alert are all
Without, within, and ready for the call;
Smart lads and light run nimbly here and there,
Nor for neglected duties mourns the Bear.

To his retreats, on the election-day,
The losing party found their silent way;
There they partook of each consoling good,
Like him uncrown'd, like him in sullen mood—
Threat'ning, but bound.—Here meet a social kind,
Our various clubs for various cause combined;

Nor has he pride, but thankful takes as gain
The dew-drops shaken from the Lion's mane:
A thriving couple here their skill display,
And share the profits of no vulgar sway.

Third in our Borough's list appears the sign
Of a fair queen—the gracious Caroline;
But in decay—each feature in the face
Has stain of Time, and token of disgrace.
The storm of winter, and the summer-sun,
Have on that form their equal mischief done;
The features now are all disfigured seen,
And not one charm adorns th' insulted queen:
To this poor face was never paint applied,
Th' unseemly work of cruel Time to hide;
Here we may rightly such neglect upbraid,
Paint on such faces is by prudence laid.
Large the domain, but all within combine
To correspond with the dishonour'd sign;
And all around dilapidates; you call—
But none replies—they're inattentive all:
At length a ruin'd stable holds your steed,
While you through large and dirty rooms proceed,
Spacious and cold; a proof they once had been
In honour,—now magnificently mean;
Till in some small half-furnish'd room you rest,
Whose dying fire denotes it had a guest.

In those you pass'd where former splendour reign'd,
You saw the carpets torn, the paper stain'd;
Squares of discordant glass in windows fix'd,
And paper oil'd in many a space betwixt;
A soil'd and broken sconce, a mirror crack'd,
With table underpropp'd, and chairs new-back'd;
A marble side-slab with ten thousand stains,
And all an ancient tavern's poor remains.

With much entreaty, they your food prepare,
And acid wine afford, with meagre fare;
Heartless you sup; and when a dozen times
You've read the fractured window's senseless rhymes;
Have been assured that Phœbe Green was fair,
And Peter Jackson took his supper there;
You reach a chilling chamber, where you dread
Damps, hot or cold, from a tremendous bed;
Late comes your sleep, and you are waken'd soon
By rustling tatters of the old festoon.

O'er this large building, thus by time defaced,
A servile couple has its owner placed,
Who not unmindful that its style is large,
To lost magnificence adapt their charge:
Thus an old beauty, who has long declined,
Keeps former dues and dignity in mind;
And wills that all attention should be paid
For graces vanish'd and for charms decay'd.

Few years have pass'd, since brightly 'cross the way,
Lights from each window shot the lengthen'd ray,
And busy looks in every face were seen,
Through the warm precincts of the reigning Queen :
There fires inviting blazed, and all around
Was heard the tinkling bells' seducing sound ;
The nimble waiters to that sound from far
Sprang to the call, then hasten'd to the bar ;
Where a glad priestess of the temple sway'd,
The most obedient, and the most obey'd ;
Rosy and round, adorn'd in crimson vest,
And flaming ribands at her ample breast :
She, skill'd like Circe, tried her guests to move,
With looks of welcome and with words of love ;
And such her potent charms, that men unwise
Were soon transform'd and fitted for the sties.

Her port in bottles stood, a well-stain'd row,
Drawn for the evening from the pipe below ;
Three powerful spirits fill'd a parted case,
Some cordial-bottles stood in secret place ;
Fair acid fruits in nets above were seen,
Her plate was splendid, and her glasses clean ;
Basins and bowls were ready on the stand,
And measures clatter'd in her powerful hand.

Inferior houses now our notice claim,
But who shall deal them their appropriate fame ?

Who shall the nice, yet known distinction, tell,
Between the peal complete and single Bell?

Determine, ye, who on your shining nags
Wear oil-skin beavers and bear seal-skin bags;
Or ye, grave toppers, who with coy delight
Snugly enjoy the sweetness of the night;
Ye travellers all, superior inns denied
By moderate purse, the low by decent pride;
Come and determine,—will ye take your place
At the *full* orb, or *half* the lunar face?
With the Black-Boy or Angel will ye dine?
Will ye approve the Fountain or the Vine?
Horses the *white* or *black* will ye prefer?
The Silver-Swan, or Swan opposed to her—
Rare bird! whose form the raven-plumage decks,
And graceful curve her three alluring necks?

All these a decent entertainment give,
And by their comforts comfortably live.

Shall I pass by the Boar?—there are who cry,
“Beware the Boar,” and pass determined by:
Those dreadful tusks, those little peering eyes
And churning chaps, are tokens to the wise.
There dwells a kind old aunt, and there you see
Some kind young nieces in her company;
Poor village nieces, whom the tender dame
Invites to town, and gives their beauty fame;

The grateful sisters feel th' important aid,
And the good aunt is flatter'd and repaid.

What, though it may some cool observers strike,
That such fair sisters should be so unlike;
That still another and another comes,
And at the matron's table smiles and blooms;
That all appear as if they meant to stay
Time undefined, nor name a parting day;
And yet, though all are valued, all are dear,
Causeless, they go, and seldom more appear:

Yet let Suspicion hide her odious head,
And Scandal vengeance from a burgess dread:
A pious friend, who with the ancient dame
At sober cribbage takes an evening game;
His cup beside him, through their play he quaffs,
And oft renews, and innocently laughs;
Or growing serious, to the text resorts,
And from the Sunday-sermon makes reports;
While all, with grateful glee, his wish attend,
A grave protector and a powerful friend:
But Slander says, who indistinctly sees,
Once he was caught with Silvia on his knees;—
A cautious burgess with a careful wife
To be so caught!—'tis false, upon my life.

Next are a lower kind, yet not so low
But they, among them, their distinctions know;

And when a thriving landlord aims so high,
As to exchange the Chequer for the Pye,
Or from Duke William to the Dog repairs,
He takes a finer coat and fiercer airs.

Pleased with his power, the poor man loves to say
What favourite inn shall share his evening's pay;
Where he shall sit the social hour, and lose
His past day's labours and his next day's views.
Our seamen too have choice: one takes a trip
In the warm cabin of his favourite Ship;
And on the morrow in the humbler Boat
He rows, till fancy feels herself afloat;
Can he the sign—Three Jolly Sailors pass,
Who hears a fiddle and who sees a lass?
The Anchor too affords the seaman joys,
In small smoked room, all clamour, crowd, and noise;
Where a curved settle half surrounds the fire,
Where fifty voices purl and punch require:
They come for pleasure in their leisure hour,
And they enjoy it to their utmost power;
Standing they drink, they swearing smoke, while all
Call or make ready for a second call:
There is no time for trifling—"Do ye see?
"We drink and drub the French extempore."

See! round the room, on every beam and balk,
Are mingled scrolls of hieroglyphic chalk;

Yet nothing heeded—would one stroke suffice
To blot out all, here honour is too nice,—
“ Let knavish landsmen think such dirty things,
“ We’re British tars, and British tars are kings.”

But the Green-Man shall I pass by unsung,
Which mine own James upon his sign-post hung?
His sign, his image,—for he once was seen
A squire’s attendant, clad in keeper’s green;
Ere yet with wages more, and honour less,
He stood behind me in a graver dress.

James in an evil hour went forth to woo
Young Juliet Hart, and was her Romeo:
They’d seen the play, and thought it vastly sweet
For two young lovers by the moon to meet;
The nymph was gentle, of her favours free,
Ev’n at a word—no Rosalind was she;
Nor, like that other Juliet, tried his truth
With—“ Be thy purpose marriage, gentle youth?”
But him received, and heard his tender tale
When sang the lark, and when the nightingale:
So in few months the generous lass was seen
I’ the way that all the Capulets had been.

Then first repentance seized the amorous man,
And—shame on love—he reason’d and he ran;
The thoughtful Romeo trembled for his purse,
And the sad sounds, “ for better and for worse.”

Yet could the lover not so far withdraw,
But he was haunted both by love and law :
Now law dismay'd him as he view'd its fangs,
Now pity seized him for his Juliet's pangs ;
Then thoughts of justice and some dread of jail,
Where all would blame him and where none might bail ;
These drew him back, till Juliet's hut appear'd,
Where love had drawn him when he should have fear'd.

There sat the father in his wicker throne,
Uttering his curses in tremendous tone ;
With foulest names his daughter he reviled,
And look'd a very Herod at the child :
Nor was she patient, but with equal scorn,
Bade him remember when his Joe was born :
Then rose the mother, eager to begin
Her plea for frailty, when the swain came in.

To him she turn'd, and other theme began,
Show'd him his boy, and bade him be a man ;
“ An honest man, who, when he breaks the laws,
“ Will make a woman honest if there's cause.”
With lengthen'd speech she proved what came to pass
Was no reflection on a loving lass :
“ If she your love as wife and mother claim,
“ What can it matter which was first the name ?
“ But 'tis most base, 'tis perjury and theft,
“ When a lost girl is like a widow left ;

“ The rogue who ruins ”—here the father found
His spouse was treading on forbidden ground.

“ That’s not the point,” quoth he,—“ I don’t suppose
“ My good friend Fletcher to be one of those ;
“ What’s done amiss he’ll mend in proper time—
“ I hate to hear of villany and crime :
“ ’Twas my misfortune, in the days of youth,
“ To find two lasses pleading for my truth ;
“ The case was hard, I would with all my soul
“ Have wedded both, but law is our control ;
“ So one I took, and when we gain’d a home,
“ Her friend agreed—what could she more ?—to come ;
“ And when she found that I’d a widow’d bed,
“ Me she desired—what could I less ?—to wed.
“ An easier case is yours : you’ve not the smart
“ That two fond pleaders cause in one man’s heart ;
“ You’ve not to wait from year to year distress’d,
“ Before your conscience can be laid at rest ;
“ There smiles your bride, there sprawls your new-
born son,

“ —A ring, a licence, and the thing is done.”

“ My loving James,”—the lass began her plea,
“ I’ll make thy reason take a part with me :
“ Had I been froward, skittish, or unkind,
“ Or to thy person or thy passion blind ;
“ Had I refused, when ’twas thy part to pray,
“ Or put thee off with promise and delay ;

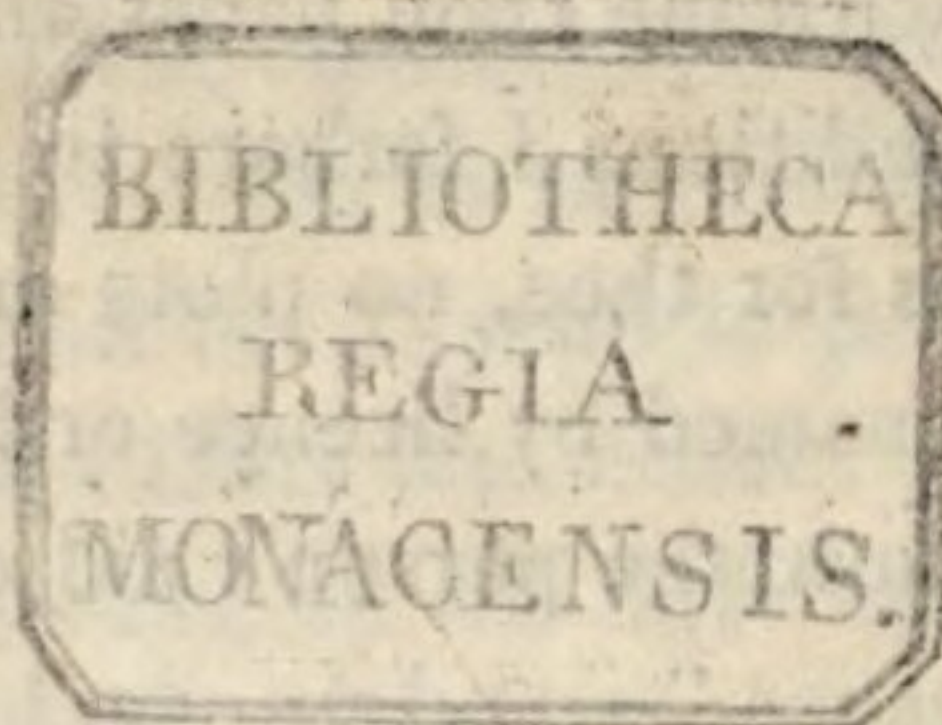
“ Thou might’st in justice and in conscience fly,
“ Denying her who taught thee to deny :
“ But, James, with me thou hadst an easier task,
“ Bonds and conditions I forbore to ask ;
“ I laid no traps for thee, no plots or plans,
“ Nor marriage named by licence or by banns ;
“ Nor would I now the parson’s aid employ,
“ But for this cause,”—and up she held her boy.

Motives like these could heart of flesh resist ?
James took the infant and in triumph kiss’d ;
Then to his mother’s arms the child restored,
Made his proud speech and pledged his worthy word.

“ Three times at church our banns shall publish’d be,
“ Thy health be drunk in bumpers three times three ;
“ And thou shalt grace (bedeck’d in garments gay)
“ The christening-dinner on the wedding day.”

James at my door then made his parting bow,
Took the Green-Man, and is a master now.

END OF VOL. II.

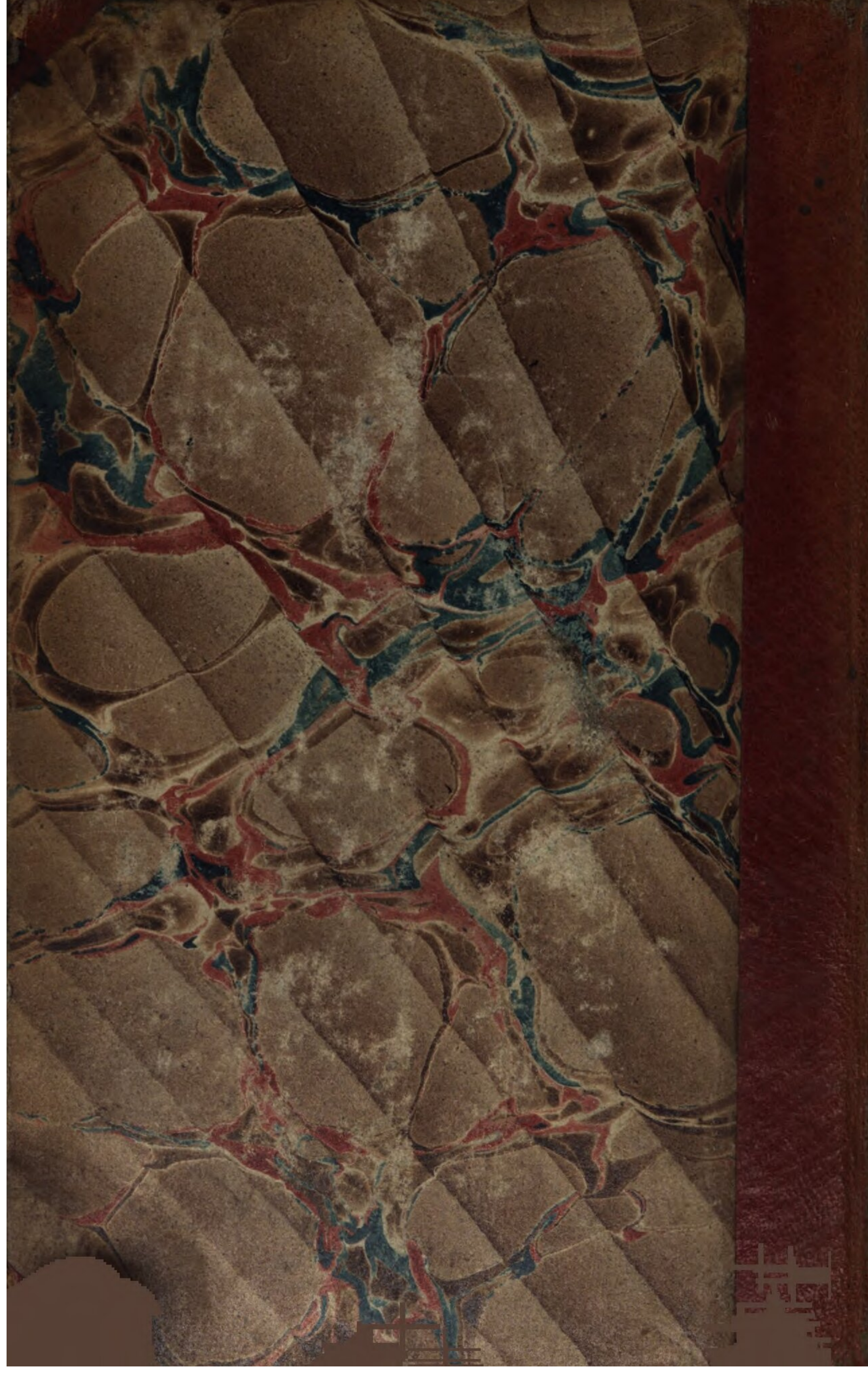


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